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The Shape of Things

THE CASE OF THE UNITED STATES VERSUS John L. Lewis proceeds, as we go to press, in a curiously irrelevant fashion. As far as the layman can make out, an inexcusably ambiguous contract may or may not have been breached; an injunction of dubious legality may or may not, in a strictly technical sense, have been disobeyed; and if it is found to have been violated, the punishment will not, in the words of the court, "very seriously interfere with anybody's comfort" should the injunction prove to have been invalid in the first place. While this performance drags along, with every prospect of appeal after appeal, the country moves rapidly toward an industrial crisis worldwide in its effects. Steel production has already slumped alarmingly, and train schedules are being seriously curtailed. A prolonged coal strike threatens inflation, crippled transportation, and widespread unemployment here at home and the direst kind of suffering abroad, where little enough is needed to push whole populations into the camp of the Communists. The most justified gains for deserving coal-miners would have to be weighed in the balance against such consequences, but Mr. Lewis's act of defiance is as disproportionate to his immediate aims as his power is incompatible with the functioning of a democratic society. That point cannot be driven home to him by the action of government alone. As long as organized labor lends him its support, however nominal, he will be a martyr or a hero, whatever the courts decide. A number of members of the Washington Newspaper Guild have taken the lead in condemning the resolution adopted by the C. I. O. convention in defense of Lewis. It remains for the top leadership to follow suit, however strongly it may object to use of the injunction. To fail is to give the wild men in Congress a golden opportunity to set American labor back many years.

★

BY AN IRONIC TWIST, CHINA'S NATIONAL Assembly has utilized the technique of democracy to destroy the last hopes of achieving a democratic constitution. Chiang Kai-shek had belatedly persuaded the Social Democratic Party to participate in the assembly by promising that the constitution would be basically that which had been agreed on last spring at the All-

Party Political Consultative Conference. But when members of the extreme right-wing C.C. clique protested that a democratic assembly must be permitted a free hand to make such changes as it wished, the Generalissimo gracefully backed down and agreed to permit unlimited amendments. Since the membership of the assembly is not only overwhelmingly Kuomintang but was hand-picked by the C.C. clique which controls the party machinery, it may be assumed that most of the reforms that were adopted last spring under pressure from the Democratic League and the Communists will be eliminated. One of the chief points of controversy concerns the power of the President under the new setup. Chiang Kai-shek's assertion that he has "no more political ambition" now that the assembly has met may be regarded with utmost skepticism. He has announced his retirement many times in the past, always with a definite political objective. It will be interesting to see what kind of constitutional changes will be necessary to persuade him to reenter political life.

★

LAST WEEK'S ELECTIONS IN URUGUAY HAVE left South America's most firmly rooted democracy intact but slightly shaken. On the surface, Tomas Barreta, of the pro-United States Colorado Party, soundly defeated Dr. Luis Alberto de Herrera, the seventy-three-year-old admirer of Hitler, Mussolini, and Perón. But the gains of the Herreristas were too marked for comfort. Actually, their leader received more votes than Barreta, who shared the Colorado ticket with two other presidential candidates; fortunately, under the Uruguayan electoral system the ballots for all candidates of a given party are assigned to its leading contender in computing the final results. The Herreristas also made gains in the Congressional campaign; they will have more Senators, and possibly more Deputies, than any single faction of the Colorados, who lost seats to the Communists as well as to their fascist opponents. Aside from the rising cost of living, the chief factors in the Herrerist gains were fear of Perón and fear that Uruguay would be left isolated by United States appeasement of Perón. The Montevideo newspaper, *El Pais*, reports that during the campaign automobiles bearing Argentine license plates

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toured the Uruguayan capital flying Herrera banners, and a New York *Times* correspondent was told by partisans of both camps that Herrerist strength has been growing not only because of Perón's election victory but because he "also apparently came to terms or is coming to terms with the United States representatives there." Here is a fact for Ambassador Messersmith to ponder.

✱

BACK IN THE TERRIBLE DAYS OF BLOOD, sweat, and tears, when the Nazis were at the Channel, three Americans were putting out a magazine whose avowed purpose was to keep us from lifting a finger in Britain's defense. Their slogan was "Steps Short of War—Mean War," and their headquarters were at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, where they had gone in order to escape from "refugee-dominated New York." The journal was *Scribner's Commentator*, which sometimes published reprints from the German-American Bund's *Wackruf*, and the three journalists were Ralph Townsend, Douglas Stewart, and George E. Eggleston. Were they just good Americans expressing a legitimate minority point of view? Or were they as sinister a crew as some of us vocally suspected? The full story has not yet been told, but the subsequent careers of the three champions of America First are worth passing notice. Mr. Townsend was hauled into court soon after Pearl Harbor for having served as a paid agent of Japan without bothering to register as such. He was duly convicted and has served his time. In 1943 Stewart told a special grand jury that his magazine was financed by two contributions from an "unknown donor" which were "left on a little table by the door." At Nürnberg last June, the former first secretary of the German embassy at Washington claimed credit for the donation, but there was no little table in his testimony. He said that he had personally handed some \$15,000 to Stewart at the Hotel Pennsylvania in New York; in consequence Stewart has just been indicted for perjury. And what about Eggleston? The transcript of the Nürnberg testimony links him to the same transaction, but he has not been called to account. He remains, in fact, the respectable associate editor of the respectable *Reader's Digest*, with a respectable circulation of more than ten million (Advt.).

✱

FOR PARIS, FRANCE, TO ATTEMPT TO BAN as obscene the works of Henry Miller is a joke that will please anybody; but for New York City to suppress "Memoirs of Hecate County" is a little too far-fetched to be a successful joke. Almost unlimited quantities of books, magazines, movies—pin-up girls, even—have more of a "tendency to deprave and corrupt the young and immature" than the cold, detailed, embarrassing few pages for which Edmund Wilson's publishers have been prosecuted; many respected works of art contain a

more "pornographic," and many textbooks of physiology a more anatomical, treatment of sexual relations. It is a pity to have a distinguished critic used as a whipping-boy for the many carefully and successfully salacious books that go scot-free. "Memoirs of Hecate County" is far less likely to corrupt young girls than to induce them to enter a convent; its suppression reminds one of the medieval ban on the dissection of corpses.

The Disarmament Debate

THE somewhat chilly reception accorded the gift horse trotted out by Mr. Molotov at the U. N.'s Thanksgiving Day parade reflected the frustration felt by most delegates after weeks of Russian stalling. Had the proposal been made in the early days of the atomic-energy discussions, or before the Paris meeting of the Foreign Ministers, or even in the first hopeful flush of the present sessions, the Western world would have been more generous in accepting the disarmament proposals at their face value. For Mr. Molotov apparently was advocating what the American and other delegates on the Atomic Energy Commission have been pressing for in vain from the very beginning: namely, the international control of atomic and—inferentially—all weapons of super-destructive power, with suitable machinery for inspection.

As Vera Dean points out on page 638, the course of the U. N. debate made it more and more clear that the Russian conception of inspection was not that being discussed in the Atomic Energy Commission. In fact, it was suggested with strong supporting evidence that the commission would be sidetracked if the Russian plans carried. The control agencies the Russians proposed would come immediately under the authority of the Security Council and be bound by its veto. *Plus ça change*, alas, seems to apply to the endless permutations and combinations of the Soviet argument. The debate has had value in that it has forced the world's attention on the crux of the disarmament issue: that nations may solemnly sign a convention renouncing all manner of weapons, but unless a system of international control and inspection is established which, once accepted by the powers, shall operate without danger of interference, then disarmament is a farce. This issue has already been faced in the Atomic Energy Commission. It had better be faced as the nations talk of extending disarmament to less—or more—lethal weapons.

Mr. Molotov's proposal for international inspection should not, however, be wholly discounted. Russia's desire for world disarmament is obvious. When Molotov was speaking of the armament burden "borne by populations who will be unable to carry the load long without complaint," he was expressing more than an altruistic

interest in the weary peoples beyond the boundaries of the Soviet Union. Russia's domestic tasks of reconstruction are enormous and have been increased by mismanagement and bad harvests. The stepped-up rate of demobilization and perhaps the recently reported troop withdrawals from Germany reflect a desperate manpower shortage on the home front. Moreover, Russia's shift on Trieste and its more conciliatory attitude on the Danube-navigation problem show an active concern in lessening tension in foreign affairs. Indeed, as far as the Foreign Ministers' Conference goes, for the first time there appears to be some hope of East and West conferring on problems of peace and not merely maneuvering to hold the line against the other side's belligerent claims.

A crucial test will come shortly. The Atomic Energy Commission has announced that it will present an interim report on progress before the end of the year. Up to now, the technical discussions have yielded valuable data on a feasible system of control. It is even conceivable that the informal testimony of scientists and engineers has done something to educate the politicians, who, after all, must have the last word. But up to the moment of Molotov's speech the Russians had not budged an inch from the position originally stated by Gromyko in favor of national as opposed to international control. Mr. Molotov appears to have reinterpreted the Gromyko plan. Will there now be a modification of the Russian attitude in the Atomic Energy Commission? Russia has in the Lilienthal-Baruch proposals the best offer of international security against atomic war it is going to get in many a long year. The Soviet Foreign Minister has a magnificent opportunity to make good on some of the bold statements he has been voicing during the past few weeks at Lake Success. The United Nations Assembly is an excellent forum, but the Atomic Energy Commission is where work is being done to build the kind of security that Russia and all of us need.

Don't Miss

NEXT WEEK'S 'NATION'

CHESTER BOWLES:

Can We Lick the Depression?

ALEXANDER WERTH:

Cable from Moscow

CAREY McWILLIAMS:

The Klan—Post-War Model

KEITH HUTCHISON:

Britain's Drive for Markets

—and other timely articles by:

Freda Kirchwey, Tris Coffin, Del Vayo, Joseph Wood Krutch and Lou Frankel

The Indian Crisis

WE ARE glad that Pandit Nehru decided after all to attend the conference of Indian leaders which the British government has assembled in the hope of allaying the new political crisis in India. It would have been a great pity if the All-India Congress Party had left a clear field in London to Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the suave lawyer who heads the minority Moslem League. It is Jinnah's maneuvers that are largely responsible for the dangerous situation which has arisen in India.

Last summer, both the Congress and the League finally accepted the plan evolved by the British Cabinet Mission for the establishment of an independent India. The plan provided for a central government controlled by an elected legislature with authority over foreign affairs, defense, and communications. Since all powers not specifically reserved were to adhere to the provincial governments, this meant that the provinces with a Moslem majority would have a large degree of autonomy. When Jinnah accepted this scheme it was assumed that he had abandoned his own plan for partitioning India and was prepared to cooperate in working out the details of the new constitution. However, the League has been consistently obstructive, and even after accepting an invitation to join the interim Cabinet, it proceeded to block all action by refusing to attend meetings when Nehru took the chair. On top of this, Jinnah announced a boycott of the Constituent Assembly, scheduled to convene December 9, thus in effect repudiating his indorsement of the Cabinet Mission plan as well as subsequent undertakings given to the Viceroy, Lord Wavell. At the same time, he again raised the cry for Pakistan—an independent Moslem India.

In view of this record of intransigence, it will not do for the British government to adopt the role of umpire and limit its efforts to pleas for conciliation. Premier Attlee should at least make it quite clear that Britain stands firmly on the basic principle of Indian unity which he enunciated before the Cabinet Mission was dispatched to New Delhi. He should likewise refuse to consent to a revision of the Mission's proposals and should back Nehru's demand that the Constituent Assembly be held without further delay. Furthermore, Jinnah should be told that the League must take part in the Assembly and cease its obstruction or quit the Cabinet.

Admittedly, this line involves risks. If Jinnah proves recalcitrant and forces the British government to intrust sole authority to a Congress administration, his followers might attempt to make good his threat of revolt—and widespread violence, if not actual civil war, might follow. But the only visible alternative would involve a bigger risk, for it would mean indefinite postponement of independence and an effort to revivify a visibly dying imperialism.

A firm stand by Mr. Attlee is all the more necessary because the London *Times*, in a truly mischievous editorial on November 28, proposed that Britain reverse its stand on Indian unity and agree to Pakistan. This is an idea that appeals to sundry Tories who hope to maintain Britain's hold on India, but it is inconceivable that the Labor government will consider it. The mere fact that such a proposal has been put forward in a paper with the standing of the *Times* is likely, however, to increase Congress suspicions that Britain is encouraging Jinnah in order to find an excuse for breaking its pledge of freedom for India.

We ourselves do not accept the view that Jinnah is just a Whitehall puppet. No doubt Britain has exploited Hindu-Moslem differences in the past, but the communal problem is, unfortunately, one that has real cultural and historical roots, and it will continue to plague India long after the British have withdrawn. It is a problem that cannot be solved by coercion. It can be solved only by the Indians themselves and only when the sole responsibility for their government rests on their shoulders.

Third-Party Obstacles

BY FRED A KIRCHWEY

THE major parties," said Harold J. Laski in his second article on American politics, "are afraid of ideas. They prevent the smooth functioning of the machines. They make the hold of the machines upon the voters both difficult and uncertain. They disturb the relation between the machines and the interests." These facts, Mr. Laski believes, have forced liberals to become "permanent rebels against the routines of action that it is the function of parties to impose," and his conclusion is that American liberals will have to build a new party with organized labor as its core.

I think the checkered history of progressive attempts to influence the politics of this country bears out this analysis: only for brief periods have the advocates of social change been able to establish effective control within the parties or within the government. Reform administrations have been swept into office on strong progressive tides—normally in the wake of economic disaster—and then have been driven to retreat before the more ruthless and well-organized pressures exercised by financial interests working through the political machines.

But if the big parties are so controlled as to make impossible their conquest from within by the progressives—by those who want "thinking government"—the story of third-party movements in America is hardly more encouraging. Except for the Republican Party which rose to power on the impetus of the Civil War, absorbing the Free Soilers and a majority of the northern Whigs to

become a second party rather than a third, no successful challenge to the two-party system has ever been made. State and regional parties have sprung up, but they have either merged with or continued to function as a sort of independent left wing—ally or gadfly—of one of the major parties. It is fair to say, I think, that the value of third parties in America has been chiefly to provide a popular platform for the expression of accumulated discontents and so to modify the behavior of the two old parties. From the Greenback and Populist parties, down through the Bull Moose Progressives in 1912 and the LaFollette Progressives in 1924, the story is the same. It does not prove that a new party cannot be created in this country; it simply reveals the inherent difficulties that must be faced if the attempt is to be made.

Other obstacles arise out of the present political situation. The Democratic defeat has caught the left in a state of disorganization bordering on collapse; or perhaps the facts should be put the other way round—the collapse of the left forces was one big reason for Democratic defeat. Their rout was partly the result of the war, which shifted the balance of power to the industrial-financial interests. But the process was underway before the war struck. It should be understood once and for all by American liberals that their total dependence upon the leadership of Roosevelt not only left them, in the end, at the mercy of the party machine, but robbed them of inner vitality and coherence. It is futile to point out that a more hopeful situation might now exist if progressives had laid the foundations of a new party in the black days of depression; futile, because Roosevelt and his bold leadership in the emergency were a gift that could not have been rejected. People who recognized the relationship between economic breakdown and political direction crystallized around Franklin D. Roosevelt as if by spontaneous chemical action. But a reverse process, equally inevitable, has fragmented and dispersed them—and at a moment when cohesion is an absolute prerequisite to any new political movement.

The recent C. I. O. convention revealed one important aspect of left disunity despite Philip Murray's desperate effort to prevent an open clash. Communist control of many key union posts has created an internal conflict bound to weaken the labor movement itself and block any political action. It is bad enough that organized labor as a whole should be split into two hostile organizations; it will prove fatal if within the C. I. O. factional divisions are repeated and multiplied down the line. For whether we work toward a new party in this country or try to force a realignment within the old parties, a progressive alliance capable of effective action must be founded on a labor movement that is at least not engaged in civil war.

The Communist issue has also increased friction among non-labor progressives, creating political groups pledged

to exclude Communists and producing disaffection in organizations in which Communists play an important part. To bring progressives together in a single political body pledged to a common program of action will be immensely difficult until the factional struggle is resolved. America offers no counterpart to the Labor Party in Britain or the Socialist parties on the Continent, which can handle their relations with the Communists in terms of fairly well-defined ideological distinctions. American progressives, operating traditionally on a hand-to-mouth, pragmatic basis, with no body of doctrine or even a systematic program of action, constantly find themselves faced with an alternative of red-baiting or fellow-traveling, neither of which coincides with their true political desires. As long as progressives acted, willy-nilly, as a subsidiary wing of the Democratic Party, the problem could be minimized, although not dodged altogether. It looms large as soon as they try to start business on their own.

For these reasons, among many more, progressives in and out of organized labor tend to be skeptic about the chances of a third party. Men like Wallace and Ickes, whatever their mutual differences, and in spite of their break with the Administration, agree in wanting to work through the Democratic Party. In fact, most New Dealers who tasted authority under Roosevelt and most labor leaders who achieved power under the New Deal recoil from the problems involved in building a new party. They know that a new party is bound to draw upon New Dealers for its initial support, insuring victory to the Republicans. They know what devotion and ardor must be generated to take the place of the patronage that cannot be dispensed until the problematical moment when victory is achieved. They know that the political habits of the people, the lack of political consciousness among workers, and above all the terrific legal and financial obstacles in the way of a new national party tend to relegate third-party movements to minor operations on the periphery of the political system.

Whether events will overcome these multiple obstacles remains to be seen. No one can doubt the ferment now stirring in the liberal ranks in this country. No one can doubt that aggressive reaction in Washington, coupled with mounting international tensions, will speed up political processes that might otherwise take many years to mature.

In the meantime, the best chance of effective action by the left lies in a nation-wide effort, among small groups and large, to formulate coherent, concrete programs of social and political change. Let us forget parties for a while. The Democrats have lost control of the government; the progressives have lost control of the Democrats. No third party will be made between now and the next depression. But what can be made are plans. Progressive groups should meet and organize, write and talk. They

should not abandon their favorite tasks of political criticism or forfeit the chance to win individual engagements. But attacks should be fortified with demands; and demands should be backed by a political program that makes sense.

[This is the second in a series of editorial discussions of the political situation following the Republican victory on November 5. The next will take up some of the major issues facing American progressives.]

CORRECTION

A typographical error distorted the meaning of a sentence in Robert Bendiner's article, C. I. O. Tightrope Act, which appeared in last week's issue. The passage should have read: "If the National Citizens' Political Action Committee, which is slated to merge with the Independent Citizens' Committee for the Arts, Sciences, and Professions, does not change its name, C. I. O.-P. A. C. will. And in all likelihood it will move its headquarters away from New York."

Arms and Mr. Molotov

BY VERA MICHELES DEAN

Lake Success, November 30

THE lack of mutual confidence that has hitherto stymied all post-war attempts at international collaboration was never so nakedly apparent as during the debates of the Political and Security Committee this past week on disarmament. On November 27 the committee disposed of the controversial troop-census question when it voted, point by point, on British amendments to the original Russian resolution. As approved by the committee, the member nations must submit to the Secretary General of the U. N., Trygve Lie, by January 1, information as of December 15 on their total armed forces at home and abroad, including "military-type formations," a phrase referring to uniformed organizations like the Soviet secret police. A British amendment that would have made the troop census subject to verification "on the spot" by representatives of the Security Council was defeated—with the United States, which has stressed the need for a system of international inspection in the case of atomic energy, unexpectedly opposing inspection in this instance. Russian proposals that the reports to the U. N. should contain information on armaments as well as men, including atomic bombs and rocket weapons, were also defeated.

Mr. Molotov, however, who not only has endless resources of debating strategy but also is tireless in pursuing his objectives, returned to the attack on Thanksgiving Day, when he surprised his colleagues by submitting a resolution to the Political and Security Committee accepting the principle of international inspection and control as a means of verifying compliance both with proposed measures of general disarmament and with measures to outlaw atomic weapons. It had been rumored that two schools of thought existed in Moscow, one addicted to a strongly nationalistic policy, which was said to be favored by Molotov, and the other, reputed to include Stalin, more receptive to cooperation with foreign nations. Consequently, Molotov's public espousal of Stalin's dictum on a subject which the United States con-

sidered of paramount importance for an agreement on the control of atomic energy was welcomed at Lake Success as a big step forward.

But careful analysis of Mr. Molotov's Thanksgiving Day proposals and of Mr. Vishinsky's demand on November 29 that the committee accept the Russian resolution without amendments—then, he said playfully, "there will be no disagreement"—seriously dampened initial enthusiasm among other delegations. The core of Molotov's resolution concerning inspection is the establishment "within the framework of the Security Council" of two special organs—a commission for controlling the execution of decisions on the reduction of armaments, and a commission for controlling the execution of decisions on the prohibition of the use of atomic energy for military purposes. As Norman J. O. Makin, Australian ambassador to Washington, pointed out in a closely reasoned speech on November 29, the creation of these commissions might result in sidetracking the work accomplished thus far by the Atomic Energy Commission, whose establishment as an independent organ had been approved by the Soviet government at the first session of the General Assembly in London. The Baruch plan, it will be remembered, provides that the Atomic Energy Commission shall not be hampered in its task of controlling and punishing violations by any member's exercise of the veto power. Russia has strenuously opposed this point in the Baruch plan, regarding it as a sort of back-door attempt to circumvent the veto altogether—although, as has been pointed out in this series before, the United States has no intention at the present time of urging abandonment of the veto in the Security Council. Should the second commission—on atomic energy—proposed by Mr. Molotov be established "within the framework" of the Security Council, will it, Mr. Makin inquired, supersede the Atomic Energy Commission, and will its operations be subject to veto by any one of the five permanent members of the Council? In essence, does Molotov's proposal for inspection and control both of

general disarmament and of the use of atomic energy for war purposes mean inspection and control by the great powers, always with the possibility that Russia will invoke the veto to block any measure it opposes?

Doubts, too, were expressed as to Russia's main object in pressing urgently for general disarmament. While Vishinsky, in an eloquent speech blending sarcasm with emotion, declared that he agreed with Senator Connally about the need for progressive international and multi-lateral disarmament, he made it crystal clear that by "progressive" disarmament Russia means abolition, first of all, of the most dangerous weapon, the atomic bomb, which, he said, hangs over the world like "a sword of Damocles." In other words, Russia has not changed its main objective, which is to terminate the production and stockpiling of atomic bombs. Having failed to achieve this objective in the Atomic Energy Commission, having failed also to obtain inclusion of information about atomic bombs in the armed-forces reports to be submitted by member nations to Trygve Lie, it is now bringing up new arguments in the hope of breaching the resistance of the United States and other nations committed to the kind of control contemplated in the Atomic Energy Commission. In adopting this new line of approach Russia hopes to enlist the sympathy of those nations which might be fearful of atomic warfare in general or of the Western powers in particular.

But while the Russians remain hard-boiled negotiators, they are beginning to find that other nations have become hard-boiled, too. The prevailing skepticism was well expressed by Senator Connally when Mr. Vishinsky asked him to speak more slowly because he found it hard to follow the translation. Discovering that something had gone wrong temporarily with the Russian delegate's ear-phones, the Senator said good-naturedly: "My Soviet friend appears to have his wires crossed. I hope he doesn't have his fingers crossed."

This skepticism about Russia's intentions is not surprising, considering the series of reverses experienced by the Western powers in trying to come to terms with Russia both in the United Nations organization and in the Council of Foreign Ministers. In both places the Soviet representatives have recently appeared to display a more conciliatory attitude. But other countries have become inured to the expectation that what the Russians have accepted today they may try to undo tomorrow, and therefore place little trust in any move made by Moscow, no matter how constructive it may be. This lack of confidence, without which, as one delegate after another keeps pointing out, no real progress can be made in any direction, least of all in the direction of disarmament, is reacting against Russia; and if Moscow should now be genuinely ready to arrive at an accord with other nations, it would find the going much harder than a year ago.

John L.'s Last Stand

BY TRIS COFFIN

Washington, November 29

THE angry, bewildered look on the massive face of John L. Lewis is the most eloquent story in Washington today. It may mean the end of the coal strike in a few days. His expression now is in startling contrast to the pose of majestic defiance that he displayed so theatrically all through the coal crisis last spring and again this fall up to his appearance in court on Monday. During the previous week John Lewis strode through his scenes like John Barrymore, with fascinated reporters, photographers, and spectators staring at him. On Monday he entered the small federal courtroom in Washington surrounded by seven attorneys. When they parted, the crowd saw a tired and pallid old man. His skin was an unhealthy gray. The muscles of his face sagged. The bold look in his eyes had been replaced by an uneasy stare. The only sign of belligerence was his thick under lip, pressed out. For a moment he turned to look at the benches behind him. The John L. Lewis we have been watching for weeks would have struck a dramatic pose. But on Monday he gave a quick, furtive look around.

During the long hours of legal argument Lewis was by turns nervous, vaguely inattentive, and absorbed. On Wednesday he betrayed his sense of angry frustration when he tried to smash a camera with his walking stick. The old John Lewis was a favorite with camera men because he posed so well for them.

The old adventurer's luck is beginning to play out, and he has lost some of the sureness that carried him through his earlier gambles. He is under the greatest pressure he has ever experienced—from members of his own union, from friends, from the American Federation of Labor. And over his head hangs the threat of violent action by the Administration and Congress, egged on by a furious public opinion. Among his adherents there is disagreement over strategy. Before Big John told the government he was going to break the Krug-U. M. W. agreement, he was advised against it by two of the men closest to him—his brother, A. D. (Dennie) Lewis, and his loyal personal attorney, Wellie Hopkins. They felt he was taking too big a risk. But Lewis went ahead, counting on the Administration crumbling

meekly before his demands and on the industry wanting coal more than his scalp.

According to those who have been in the coal fields this week, the miners are beginning to wonder whether their chieftain perhaps was not thinking more of himself than of his union. Local U. M. W. leaders have cautiously told reporters that the miners were happy with the generous Krug-Lewis agreement and afraid they might lose its benefits by Lewis's belligerence. The forgotten men in the crisis, the men who dig the coal, are bitter against the operators and the Administration, but they have more than a suspicion that John Lewis put them in their present unhappy position.

Lewis was counting, as he always has in the past, on the desperate need for coal eventually outweighing all the fury directed against him. But this time he apparently made a miscalculation. Public resentment shifted after November 5 from the Democrats to John L. Lewis. He had become the villain responsible for shortages and high prices, and the failure of the brave post-war world to develop. The remarks of people passing the headquarters of the United Mine Workers and the District of Columbia courthouse are grim; they want to see John L. Lewis in chains. The same feeling sweeps through the Capitol. The Administration is just as determined to break Lewis's power as the grizzled Maryland farmer who stood outside the courtroom and vowed he would stay there until Lewis was led out to jail.

President Truman's wrath at the mine leader is kept at a high pitch by the same conservative Democratic Senators who insisted that he fire Henry Wallace. They are even angrier than the Republican leadership, which is playing a careful wait-and-see game in the hope that Mr. Truman can turn the labor vote over to the G. O. P. The President's personal advisers are delighted that his firmness on the coal strike has regained for him much of the prestige he lost in the preceding months. The Republicans, whom Lewis might expect to reward him for political services, are staying clear of him. He is strictly on his own.

Men on Capitol Hill who are friendly with Lewis or the U. M. W.—there is a difference—are pleading with the miners to settle the strike before the wrath of the public consumes them and the rest of organized labor. Senator Wheeler of Montana, long a personal friend of the miners, is one of several individuals in Washington who are sending out peace feelers through the White House, the operators, and the union. Wheeler's solution, and it may not be original with him, is a face-saving compromise. The Administration must turn back the mines to the operators. It would hardly object to this, for Secretary Krug has been trying to get rid of the mines all the autumn. The operators must agree to sit down and bargain with the U. M. W. in good faith—there seems to be some difficulty about this point. But according to

word sent by Wheeler to the White House, the operators are willing to meet Lewis halfway on a major question—the number of work hours in a standard week before overtime is paid. The compromise is said to be for the owners to pay a fifty-four-hour wage for a forty-five-hour week. Lewis must call the miners back to the pits and see that they stay there during the negotiations.

The first real break in the strike came last week after Cyrus Eaton, the Cleveland industrialist, met Lewis in Washington and warned him that industry was fed up and that if the strike continued many more days industry would shut its doors and starve the miners out no matter how long it took. The union would be destroyed and so would John L. Lewis. Industry has another weapon. It could say to hell with coal; let natural gas, oil, and water-power take its place—a good example of what the economic displacement of coal means is to be seen in the anthracite fields. Those who know all about the Eaton-Lewis conferences say the Cleveland banker made a proposal. If the U. M. W. would send the miners back to the pits, he would attempt to persuade the coal operators to negotiate a satisfactory contract.

Lewis was undoubtedly impressed. Word that the U. M. W. was willing to call off the strike came first on November 24 in a broadcast by Albert N. Dennis, a labor commentator very close to the A. F. of L. and the U. M. W. He said, "A settlement of the issues can be reached and the work stoppage ended with reasonable promptness by the very simple and just process of collective bargaining. . . . It is the consensus of opinion that the work stoppage will not be long drawn out, that there will be a break almost immediately." Dr. Steelman was quietly drawn back into the coal-strategy huddles at the White House. But the Administration was still going to hold the court case over Lewis's head in case he tried to renege.

Two days ago the chief stumbling-block was Ed Burke, head of the Southern Coal Producers' Association. He is the former Senator from Nebraska who fought the Wagner Labor Act and the National Labor Relations Act. Since his political defeat he has lobbied vigorously for anti-labor legislation. Two of his clients, the Island Creek Coal Company and the Pocahontas Fuel Company of West Virginia, are among the most important producers in the country. On September 17, when the Federal Coal Administrator formally proposed to the U. M. W. and the operators that the mines be turned back to the owners, Burke balked. He said flatly that he would not consider the Krug-Lewis agreement, which he thought far too generous. Specifically, he objected to the miners' welfare fund, which is raised by a tax on every ton of coal mined and is administered by a joint board of the union, the operators, and the government.

Yesterday Burke made a statement which on the face of it seemed generous and a turn-about. He said the

operators would be "very happy" to negotiate with the U. M. W., adding, "We think the miners are entitled to the best of treatment, and we are even willing to talk with them about a shorter work week." But there was a big catch in his offer. He proposed that the negotiations should start from scratch and forget all about the Krug-Lewis agreement. This meant that the United Mine Workers would stand a chance of losing the welfare

fund and many safety provisions established by the agreement. The operators also could, if they had a mind to, stall the negotiations until January, when Congress returns and can threaten to throw the book at the miners if they walk out again.

At this point Lewis does not seem to have any alternative. He will have to take his chances. The next few days will tell how willing he is to eat humble pie.

Trusteeship Takes Shape

BY RUPERT EMERSON

PERHAPS no section of the Charter of the United Nations was left more open to variant interpretations, after San Francisco and even after the first meeting of the General Assembly in London, than Chapter XII, which laid the groundwork for the new international-trusteeship system. The old mandates system had for all practical purposes died with the outbreak of the war; its successor was given a name at San Francisco and a sketchy blueprint of what was expected of it, but the new baby showed few signs of life. At Flushing and Lake Success efforts to invigorate it and to translate into reality the high-sounding phrases and admirable aspirations of the blueprint have resulted in frequently high-sounding but not always admirable debates. As usual, the United States and the Soviet Union are the two major disputants, although the brazen attempt of South Africa to gain the blessing of the United Nations for the incorporation of Southwest Africa into its system of racial discrimination distracted attention for a time from the Big Two.

The position of our government is gradually being revealed. Regrettably the United States seems to be seasoning its traditional anti-imperialist policy with a hankering for Pacific islands, antagonism to the Soviet Union, and a general liking for order and respectability.

At the present session of the Assembly the chief issues to be settled are which territories shall be placed in trusteeship, by what method this shall be decided, and whether the terms of trusteeship in particular cases shall be approved. In the background—because it is a matter for the Security Council and not the General Assembly—is the question of the disposition of the mandated and other islands of Japan now under the military government of the United States.

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A brief review of the origin of the trusteeship system will help to explain the current dispute in the Assembly. The preliminary labors of Dumbarton Oaks produced no decision about colonies in general or the fate of the mandates system in particular, but it was understood that this would have to be one of the main pieces of new business at the prospective United Nations conference. At Yalta it was agreed that the five permanent members of the Security Council would put their heads together to shape definite proposals for submission to the San Francisco conference. These proposals were to be based on the understanding that the application of the system to particular territories would be a matter for subsequent agreement; the territories to be considered available for trusteeship were the former mandates, areas detached from the enemy as a result of the war, and any other territory that might voluntarily be offered up.

The chapters on trusteeship and the Trusteeship Council formulated at San Francisco, although in many respects an improvement on the old League system, were not immediately applicable to any specific territory, and were not even an effective guide as to the procedure by which such territories were to be designated. The types of territories to which the system might apply were listed precisely as in the Yalta formula, and lest the moral be lost on any casual reader, a second paragraph stated: "It will be a matter for subsequent agreement which territories in the foregoing categories will be brought under the trusteeship system and upon what terms." To increase the uncertainties, a further article stated that the terms of trusteeship, including any alteration or amendment, should be agreed upon by "the states directly concerned," including the mandatory power if it was a United Nations member. No hint was given as to the criteria by which the states directly concerned were to be identified. Apparently this phrase was merely an evasion of the real problem, and like most evasions it was bound to cause trouble.

The United States did not play a very generous or engaging role in the trusteeship discussions at San Fran-

cisco. The internationalism of the American position was tempered by the knowledge that a large number of islands, commanding a vast sweep of the Pacific and reaching to the China coast, had fallen to American arms. The navy, backed by powerful elements in Congress and elsewhere, had no intention of seeing them slip from its grasp. Enough pressure was brought on the American delegation to obtain the inclusion in Chapter XII of two articles, tailor-made for the United States, which allowed any trusteeship agreement to name part or all of the trust territory as a strategic area. For such strategic areas the Security Council, not the Assembly, exercises all the functions of the United Nations, assisted, if it desires, by the Trusteeship Council. The basic social, political, and economic objectives of the trusteeship system are secured to the people of a strategic area, but the silence on all other matters indicates that the provisions as to reporting, examination, and inspection become applicable to strategic areas only to the extent that the relevant agreements specifically so provide.

The Assembly sessions in London threw no new light on the question, although it became even more apparent than before that the only territories likely to be placed under trusteeship were the former mandates, with the probable addition of Southwest Africa and of some of the Italian and Japanese colonies. Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Belgium, and later France all announced that they would convert their mandates into trusteeships, but the United States did not reveal its intentions, except for hints that we were against sin when committed by other people. An ill-advised comment by President Truman at a press conference early in the year indicated that his indorsement of the trusteeship system was equaled by his lack of comprehension of its intricacies. Vanished from the scene were earlier notions that some trusteeships might be administered by the United Nations and that some of the world's strategic areas—the Japanese-mandated islands, for example—would be utilized as United Nations bases and manned by international forces for the maintenance of global rather than national security.

In the behind-the-scenes conversations which took place before the present sessions of the Assembly, little real progress was made. Draft agreements for all the former non-independent mandates except Palestine, Southwest Africa, Nauru, and the Japanese islands have now been submitted to the Assembly, for consideration in the first instance by its Trusteeship Committee, but certain basic issues of interpretation remain unsettled.

One of these is, of course, the troublesome phrase "states directly concerned," on the interpretation of which the United States and the U. S. S. R. have joined issue. The United States, through John Foster Dulles, has come forward with an original suggestion which, if it

were not so clearly a misreading of the Charter, would appear to make good sense. This is that the "s" should be dropped from the word "states" and that only the state having direct control over a territory through sovereignty or mandate should frame the original trusteeship document—clearly no longer an agreement—for ultimate approval by a two-thirds' Assembly vote. The advantages of this proposal, as Mr. Dulles pointed out, are considerable in that it avoids the delays involved in preliminary negotiations, evades the issue of direct concern on the part of other states, and eliminates the possibility that some state directly concerned might exercise a veto power before the proposed agreement ever reached the Assembly. Mr. Dulles asserted the readiness of the United States to waive its right as a state directly concerned with the trusteeships of other countries on the basis of geography or of rights deriving from World Wars I and II if other states would do the same.

Objections to his proposal are based on its inconsistency with the Charter and also on its presumably clear intent to shake the Soviet Union out of any more direct concern with the initiation of trusteeships than comes from membership in the General Assembly. A further purpose may be to limit to one the states having primary jurisdiction over a later trusteeship agreement for Palestine. If the price of its adoption is to be a bitter sense on the part of the Soviet Union that it is being deliberately pushed out of the picture, then the proposal had probably better not be pressed.

Unfortunately the main statement of Nikolai Novikov on behalf of the Soviet Union did little to advance a solution, although some of his criticism of specific trusteeship provisions as retrograde rather than progressive in character was certainly well founded. However great one's sympathy with Soviet condemnation of the South African annexation plan, it is difficult not to agree with Marshal Smuts's comment that the Soviet statement was "a piece of crude propaganda intended to influence only the uninformed and unthinking." Attacking the British assumption that the only states directly concerned with Britain's African mandates were France, Belgium, and South Africa, Mr. Novikov said that since these countries were, by "a unilateral and an altogether arbitrary" decision of Prime Minister Attlee, the only ones consulted, the Soviet Union must regard the proposed trusteeship agreements as only preliminary drafts which had still not been cleared through the proper channels. In a significant aside Mr. Novikov challenged the suggestion of Mr. Dulles that the United States would have a right to be considered a state directly concerned with all mandates because of its share in the treaties winding up World War I. In the Soviet view these treaties could not affect events occurring after the creation of the United Nations, which established new principles in international relations. On the basis of these statements

it is a plausible assumption that the Soviet Union regards itself as a state directly concerned in the initiation of all trusteeships, but Mr. Novikov at no point said so, nor did he propose any general criteria.

On another score Mr. Novikov went at least as far off the United Nations Charter reservation as had Mr. Dulles. The Soviet spokesman not only attacked Britain and Australia for failing to come up with trusteeship agreements for Palestine and Nauru but accused them of violating the Charter. This was argued on the wholly untenable ground that there are only two legal ways of determining the fate of mandated territories—by granting them true independence (he also questioned the true independence of Trans-Jordan) or by transforming them into trust territories. While this contention represents the spirit of the Charter, the principle had been accepted, from Yalta through San Francisco, that no territory would become a trust save by voluntary agreement. Mr. Dulles was on sound ground when he said later that if the Soviet view were adopted for the mandates it should also be applied to the Kuriles, which were handed over to the Soviet Union from Japan.

While these debates were getting under way in the General Assembly's Trusteeship Committee, the United States was at long last producing its solution for the Japanese islands. An announcement by President Truman stated that the United States was prepared to place under trusteeship the Japanese-mandated islands and any other Japanese islands for which it assumed responsibilities, and that it was distributing to the other members of the Security Council and to New Zealand and the Philippines a draft of a strategic-area trusteeship agreement for the mandates. This draft is to be submitted formally to the Security Council for its approval at an early date. The State Department had won its battle for the principle of trusteeship, but the navy carried off a good many of the prizes. The United States has full power over the territory as an integral part of the United States; it has full military, naval, and air rights; it can limit aircraft flying into and out of the territory; and, perhaps most significant of all, it can determine to what extent the United Nations' right to examine and inspect is applicable "to any areas which may from time to time be specified by it as closed for security reasons." In sum, the whole sweep of the mandated islands, not merely the actual base areas, is declared a strategic area, and whenever the United States finds the United Nations or its organs over-inquisitive it can seal off any part or the whole of the area.

Until this plan is formally offered in the Security Council, the attitude of the Soviet Union and of other states directly, or indirectly, concerned will presumably not be known. As far as the record discloses, no effort has been made to win the agreement of the Soviet Union in advance, which seems a foolhardy tempting of fate



Paul-Henri Spaak
President of the General Assembly

in view of the veto. Mr. Dulles did not help the situation when he emphasized the unilateral nature of the American proposal by remarking that if the United States did not obtain approval of the proposed agreement it would hold on to the islands anyhow.

An opportunity to elaborate the American position was presented when India introduced a resolution calling for the adoption of the general principle that trust territories should be administered by the United Nations itself rather than by any single country. Attractive as this seems in theory, authorities on colonial problems generally agree that one-country rule, despite its dangers, is preferable to the confusions almost inevitably resulting from international administration. In rejecting the Indian resolution, Mr. Dulles stressed that the United Nations was not at present organized to deal with the concrete and large-scale administrative problems posed by the trust territories, although he assumed that the international body, as it matured, would play an increasingly large role in trusteeship matters.

Mr. Dulles pointed out that under the wording of the Charter the establishment of the Trusteeship Council, which should be one of the major fruits of the present Assembly session, would become impossible if the United Nations were to be the usual administering authority. Until at least some states are identified as

administrators of trust territories through the approval of trusteeship agreements, the council cannot be brought into existence. This process has got off to a slow start with examination of the agreement proposed by New Zealand for Western Samoa. The heated debates over

such matters as amendment of the agreement in the Assembly and the establishment of bases show that there are still many hurdles to be got over before the Trusteeship Council can swing into action as the major international instrumentality of the system.

Radio's Operation Crossroads

BY CHARLES A. SIEPMANN

JUSTIN MILLER, president of the National Association of Broadcasters, has stumped the country for some weeks, inveighing against the authors and supporters of the Federal Communications Commission's "Blue Book." He has described members of the FCC as "stooges for the Communists," "obfuscators," "professional appeasers," "guileful men," and "astigmatic perverts."

The Blue Book—officially titled "Public Service Responsibility of Broadcast Licensees"—is already a collectors' item and has been neither seen nor read by the majority of radio listeners. Its contents were summarized as follows by Charles Denny, chairman of the FCC, speaking at a meeting of the National Association of Broadcasters in Chicago on October 21:

The Blue Book says that when an applicant [for a station license] represents that he is going to do certain things, he should, in fact, do something reasonably close to what he said he would do. The Blue Book says that a reasonable amount of time, including some time in the desirable parts of the broadcast day, should be devoted to sustaining programs. . . .

The Blue Book says that a broadcaster should devote a reasonable amount of time to local live programs. . . . A true broadcaster will not content himself simply with plugging his transmitter into a network or a turntable and going off to Florida for the winter. Unless there is to be some organization of local live programs, we do not need radio stations in the various communities. All we require are unattended boosters.

The Blue Book says that radio should not content itself with being simply an entertainment medium. . . . Radio should make an adequate amount of time available for the discussion of public issues. . . .

The Blue Book says that advertising plays an in-

dispensable part in our system of broadcasting, but that should not mean that broadcasting should be run solely in the interest of advertisers rather than that of listeners.

That, said Mr. Denny, is the Blue Book. "*We do not intend to bleach it.*"

His assertion lends peculiar interest to a decision which the FCC must make on a fateful date in the near future. On January 13 hearings will be held on the application of Station WBAL in Baltimore for renewal of its license. The FCC's decision will be the test of the sincerity of Mr. Denny's claim that the commission stands by the Blue Book and does not intend to bleach it.

Station WBAL, Baltimore, is a "clear-channel" station with tremendous range and one of the most powerful transmitters in the country. When it sought a clear channel from the FCC in 1927, the station submitted a description which said that "although WBAL is owned by a private corporation [Consolidated Gas and Electric Company of Baltimore], its operation closely approximates that of a public enterprise." The station at that time retained as regular features, "to insure a uniformly high standard of program," a concert orchestra, an opera company, a salon orchestra, a dinner orchestra, a string quartet, and four other musical combinations.

But in November, 1934, control of the station passed into the hands of the Hearst interests. So marked was the change of tune that the station's record in 1944 was cited in the Blue Book as a prize example of gross default.

During the week beginning Sunday, April 23, 1944 [says the Blue Book], only 12.5 per cent of the program time between 8 a.m. and 11 p.m. was "sustaining." On Monday through Friday of that week less than 6 per cent of the program time between 8 a.m. and 11 p.m. was sustaining; and no sustaining programs whatever were broadcast on those days between 2 p.m. and 11 p.m., a total of forty-five hours. . . . Between 8 a.m. and 11 p.m. of the week beginning April 23, 1944, Station WBAL broadcast 507 spot announcements, of which 6 were sustaining public-service announcements. An example, not unique, of the piling up of spot announcements is found in the forty-five-minute period from 8:15 a.m. to 9 a.m. on Monday, April 24, 1944, during which sixteen spot announcements were broadcast, or one every 2.8 minutes. . . . Less than 2.5

CHARLES A. SIEPMANN is chairman of the Department of Communications in the School of Education of New York University and author of "Radio's Second Chance." Because the FCC's decision with regard to Station WBAL is so important for the future of radio, Lou Frankel's regular page was omitted to make room for this discussion of the case. In *One Ear* will appear as usual next week.

per cent of the station's time between 8 a.m. and 11 p.m. during the week was devoted to sustaining programs of local live origin. . . . During the entire week in question, the only local live-music broadcast by Station WBAL between 8 a.m. and 11 p.m. was as follows: a ten-minute music-award commercial program, Musical Maneuvers (thirty minutes), and Songs of Romance, commercial, at various times, totaling fifty minutes for the week. . . . During the week beginning April 23, 1944, NBC designated nineteen programs as public-service programs. Of these, Station WBAL carried five and failed to carry fourteen.

The decision which the commission must make on the renewal of this station's license is not an easy one, for it renewed the license in 1942, when by the standards of the Blue Book WBAL was already in default.

Two alternative decisions appear open to the commission. One is to make the principles of the Blue Book retroactive and deny the renewal of the license; the other is to renew the license, either temporarily or for the statutory three-year period, on the strict understanding that the station will now and in the future conform in practice to the principles of public service enunciated in the Blue Book. (Since 1944 the station appears to have mended its ways to some extent.)

The FCC's decision is complicated somewhat by the presentation of a claim upon this station's frequency by two nationally known columnists—Messrs. Pearson and Allen. Without doubt these rival applicants will cite the Blue Book as evidence of Station WBAL's incompetence to serve the public interest and will submit program proposals intended to outbid those of the present licensee. How, in the scales of justice, shall the commission weigh the claims of a station which, while it defaulted in the past, gives pledges of reform, against the promise of a rival applicant to render even better public service? It is a nice question.

What is exciting and important about this case is that it offers opportunity for a community to make its wishes the decisive factor in determining the commission's verdict. The commission and the radio industry agree that the public ought to be the final arbiter of what goes on the air. The people of Baltimore and Maryland, and listeners farther afield within the service area of this powerful station, now have the chance to register their will. The decision should be theirs. It will be so only if interested groups in these communities present their testimony at the hearings and claim this right in time. Women's organizations, representatives of labor, farmers, and many other groups should organize—and quickly—to examine this case and submit testimony. It is a rare opportunity to test whether democracy works.

The greatest weakness in our system of broadcasting is the indifference of the public to the possibilities of radio service. Listeners to Station WBAL can now contribute to a momentous decision on which depends not

only the quality of this one station but the service to be expected of all the thousands of stations in the country. If the principles of the Blue Book are not sustained in this decision, the FCC will be giving a green light to the radio industry to drop the book in the waste basket and continue blithely "down the primrose path of dalliance" which for too many years it has been treading. Civic groups in Maryland should realize that the eyes of all who still have high hopes for radio are on them.

In the Wind

SANITY JOTTINGS: The Wind has been rustling through old waste baskets recently, searching for evidences that there are a good many level heads in America. Point of departure and basic criteria were provided for the Wind by Leonard Lyons, in his syndicated column of November 21. Mr. Lyons tells of one Robert Irwin, a triple-murderer, "deemed incurably insane by psychiatrists," who "is not progressively deteriorating as they predicted." This was proved recently when Irwin was asked his preferences in magazines and books. Irwin requested *Time*, *Life*, *Reader's Digest*, and "How to Win Friends and Influence People." A well man, obviously.

TAKING IT FROM THERE, the Wind looked in on Assistant Judge W. C. Purcell of the Recorder's Court in Durham, North Carolina, who last October 23 suspended sentence on two University of North Carolina students who had celebrated a birthday "by indulging in beer, gin, whiskey, and wine and then swiping \$200 worth of clothing" from a Durham haberdasher. Judge Purcell called this adventure a "college prank" and on that same October 23 sent to the roads for thirty days two Negroes convicted of stealing eight pounds of lard.

ON THE OTHER HAND, Illinois Circuit Judge Harry Fisher, in awarding unemployment compensation on October 7 to 1,500 workers who struck against Montgomery Ward in 1944, stated that "the men had a perfect right to . . . refuse to work on purely patriotic grounds." Now listen here, Judge. . . .

"SENATOR FULBRIGHT," sagely observes the Stevens Point (Wisconsin) *Daily Journal*, "is a sincere, able man. . . . unfortunately he is afflicted with a mental handicap as serious as a lost leg would be physically. He is a Rhodes scholar." So that's what a mental handicap is! Mr. Lyons, can you apply that somewhere?

BUT ADDING STABILITY to the American scene are the prices of Reno divorces, which have gone up from \$100 to \$150 each, and Senator John W. Bricker. The Senator's contribution was made in a speech, on November 20, before the Ohio Home Builders' Association, in which he declared that it is "a constant battle to keep the masses from overthrowing everything we stand for."

[We invite our readers to submit material for *In the Wind*. One dollar will be paid for each item accepted.]

The People's Front

TO THOSE familiar with the inner workings of the League of Nations James B. Reston's recent story in the *New York Times* about the trading in votes among United Nations delegates is no trivial matter. A country's silence or its acquiescence in the compromises that undermined the prestige of the Geneva institution and rendered it useless to the cause of peace was often sold to the highest bidder in the corridors; principles were discarded as blocs bargained ruthlessly for the votes that would assure their candidate's election to the League Council or some key commission.

Mr. Reston's disclosures confirm my feeling that one of the chief traffickers in ballots at the United Nations may turn out to be the Arab League. Latin American delegates with whom I have spoken categorically deny rumors of a deal with the Arab states, but their denial has not put a stop to the persistent efforts of the Middle East delegations to effect an alignment that would place the two blocs in a position to make their voice and vote strongly felt in the Assembly.

It is somehow fitting that the role of corruptor of the League, once held by Fascist Italy and the puppets of the aggressors, should today, in the U. N., fall to the Arabs, who have been thrust into the international scene by cynical power intrigue. Together with Argentina the Arab League holds undisputed title to the fascist legacy, for until Germany began to lose the war it was wholeheartedly on Hitler's side. Syria and Lebanon, during the Vichy regime, became the chief Middle Eastern base of the German command; in Iraq the Mufti, working closely with Prime Minister Al-Galaini, initiated a revolt against England with a pogrom in the classic manner; the Allied intelligence services in Cairo seized a high Egyptian official who was delivering planes to Rommel's army then at the gates of Alexandria.

An ultra-nationalist campaign financed by the Nazis produced a series of sensational plots and violent outbreaks in the Middle East. If Hollywood could lay hands on the Mufti's correspondence which is now in the archives of the State Department, it would have the stuff for the most exciting "thriller" of the year. But despite promises by Under Secretary of State Acheson that the documents would be published, they remain a carefully guarded secret. Of course their publication might cause embarrassment in London; they would undoubtedly reveal that the Nazi solution of the Jewish problem—the gas chamber—originated with the spiritual leader of the Moslem world.

The elevation of the Arab states to their present position in world affairs is further proof of British ingenuity in extricating the empire from one of its crises. Almost overnight Britain succeeded in transforming allies of Hitler into respected members of the United Nations. The nations of the Levant declared war against Germany a few weeks before the Nazi collapse, thus, without firing a single shot or losing a single man, staking out a claim to seats in the new international organization. But appeasing the Arabs was not without its penalties. The British risked the friendship of France

when they sponsored the openly anti-French activities of General Spears in Syria. Their Palestine policy cost the life of Lord Moyne, who with Spears had been one of the promoters of the Arab League. Nor could it have been pleasant for them to wink at the Mufti's escape from France, knowing well his record as an artist in pogroms and political murders. But there is no ceiling price on empire security; the British defenders of Western democracy resolutely closed their eyes and took the Arab fascists to their bosom.

The fascists of the Middle East, however, do not have the following that Hitler and Mussolini enjoyed when the Axis was in the ascendancy. The much-vaunted power of the Arab League is mostly bluff; its delegates, who move like potentates through the corridors of the United Nations, are backed by only a handful of feudal, corrupt elements in their respective countries. An outstanding exception among them is Edward Atiyah, a genuine liberal who is the league's representative in London. But in general the strength of the league is based on the suppression of all progressive movements and civil rights at home. Only last week an eminent Moslem liberal, Fawzi al Hussein, cousin and opponent of the Mufti, was assassinated because he advocated friendly relations with the Jews.

The so-called irreconcilable conflict between Arabs and Jews is another bluff invented out of whole cloth by the big powers to serve their special interests. I remember the day at Geneva, in the early twenties, when at a private dinner Feisal openly expressed himself in support of the Zionist cause. At that time the other Arab countries were much less concerned about Palestine. The "war" between Jews and Arabs started later, as a result of the work done by Bishop Macinnes, a notorious anti-Semite who was sent by the British to Jerusalem, and by Cardinal Barlassina, the Vatican representative. With the aid of General Storrs, who was then governor of Jerusalem, they brought the Mufti's family to power, supplying funds and other forms of help in an effort to delay the logical solution of the Palestine problem.

To suggest that the Arab League is a British invention designed solely to combat Zionism would be to narrow the issue and ignore the great dangers involved. After all, the Palestine problem will sooner or later be solved. But there will remain the Arab states, which today, because of Anglo-Soviet rivalry in the Middle East, are playing an international role out of all proportion to their importance. Ultimately they may prove a nuisance to both the major powers. The present pro-British orientation of the Arabs is, to say the least, ephemeral; replying to the charge that the Arab League "speaks Arabic with a British accent," Secretary General Accam Pasha said: "This suit is made of British cloth, but I am wearing it." As for Russia, if it plays ball with the Arab states, it will come off no better than it did in Perón's Argentina. Fascists remain fascists, and nothing can change them.

DEL VAYO

Reaching the Limit in Austria

BY G. E. R. GEDYE

Vienna, November 6

GENERAL MARK CLARK returned to Vienna for his farewell visit two days ago to find Austria moving rapidly toward the worst crisis it has faced since the reestablishment of the republic. In some respects conditions are slightly better than those prevailing at the onset of the winter of 1945-46, the first after the Red Army had bombed and shelled its way into Vienna and the retreating S. S. divisions had burned and dynamited all they could of the hated city. But psychologically, conditions are infinitely worse, for the Austrians have lost the one asset which buoyed them up in November, 1945—hope. Hope was all the Allied Commission could hold out to the Austrians that first winter. "Till the winter is over," it said officially, "survival, not recovery, is all we can aim at."

Austrians believed then that the ultimate goal of the Allies was the realization of their own solemn declaration in Moscow in 1943—that a "free and independent Austria" should be re-created. Now, nobody believes that the Allies are united in seeking any goal; a really "free and independent Austria" seems to be the last thing some of them desire. Last year Austrians hoped that UNRRA would bring an improvement in the emergency rations issued by the armies. Instead, UNRRA put off its responsibilities month after month, and when it did start distributing supplies, the ration scale was lower than the previous military one. Now it is still lower, only 1,200 calories as against the military ration of 1,550. Germans are starving on 300 more than that. Chancellor Figl's announcement that thanks to UNRRA and the United States the ration will be raised to the promised 1,500 calories by November 10 will mean only a badly needed two pounds more of bread a week.

In the last week of October all train services were suddenly suspended; save for trains carrying vital food supplies they remain so. All through last winter the authorities struggled to restore gas for cooking; it is still only available for a few hours daily—fewer than in the summer, and new cuts are threatened. Power shortage is causing more factories to work part time: today the state had to arrange for partial compensation for their workers; this has also had to be arranged for those unable to get

to work when all means of transport are stopped by lack of power. The use of lifts, restored during the summer, is again forbidden. For three days in nine every house, office, and shop is to be deprived of current from 7 a. m. till 4 p. m.; one never knows when current will be cut off even after dark, leaving one in total darkness for from one to four hours—candles of course are unprocurable, but there is a little very low-grade petroleum for the few fortunate enough to own oil lamps.

Worse hardships than these could be faced with courage if people could see light ahead, could perceive any evidence of steady progress, however slow. The real crisis in Austria is one of confidence. The Austrians see no reason to believe that the Allies either intend to help them to their feet or will allow them to rebuild the country out of their own resources.

On October 29 the government, stung by endless attacks from newspapers of all three parties, especially in the provinces, called a secret session of Parliament—the last secret session, held after the Piave disaster in 1917, heralded the final break-up of the monarchy—and told the deputies the truth, for discreet and partial release in their constituencies. The alternative to continuing as at present was to turn over Austria, lock, stock, and barrel, to the Allies and invite them to rule the country through a Cabinet of officials. A showdown in secret session was preferred because of the fear that the four Allies would wrangle in council for months over the ministries each would seek to control and that Austria in the meantime would be partitioned perhaps forever into four zones under foreign rule. Why did not the government tell the truth in public session? Because it feared that one or the other of the Allies would accuse it of disloyalty and attempt to take it over.

The writer has learned some of the facts put before the secret session; the reader must divide the blame among the Allies as his general information about them may suggest. It would be wrong to imagine, as some may be tempted to do, that Russia is the sole culprit.

Austria is so short of all kinds of textiles that the ordinary citizen can purchase no clothing whatsoever. Yet for eighteen months one of the Allies has been forcing the government to hand over from one province alone an average of 100,000 yards of textiles monthly, obtaining it by military requisition, by paying for it in schillings requisitioned from the National Bank for "occupation needs," or by even shadier methods. Payment has never been made in foreign currencies or goods.

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The raw material for these textiles was left in Austria by the Swiss as payment for the making up of larger quantities of the same material.

On October 22 General Körner, the Socialist burgo-master of Vienna, announced, "The Viennese can have only one pair of boots repaired in twelve months; only one pair of new boots will be available every five years." A survey of Vienna school children showed that 13.7 per cent are entirely without shoes; 7.3 per cent are kept from school by the lack of shoes. At the same time one of the Allies takes from one factory alone from 14,000 to 15,000 pairs a month of its output of 20,000. Austrian women have been unable to buy stockings since the occupation. From one rayon factory one Allied power has exported 500 tons of rayon, enough to keep Austrian women in stockings for years.

The Viennese have had no fuel issued for the winter. But one power holds large stocks of Austrian coal which it will sell back to Austria only at the world price—just double the domestic price, above which the Allied Commission forbids Austria to buy. Poland has failed to supply promised coal, and Austrian coal trains sent to the frontier had to return empty. Czechoslovakia has supplied only a fraction of the quantity promised. The direct cause of the stoppage of the train service was the exhaustion of coal reserves by the demand of one power for hundreds of special troop trains for maneuvers. For months one power has insisted on the export of Austrian power to Germany to feed factories there in which it is interested. One power, because it considers that another is preventing it from obtaining for its zone its due quantities of Austrian oil, holds back Austrian coal and Austrian livestock which the Austrian government wants to transfer elsewhere.

UNRRA ceases operations in December, and no definite arrangements have yet been made to replace UNRRA supplies. Yet one power has seized Austrian goods which could have been exported by Austria to pay for food, giving bonds in return to the value of 2,000,000 schillings. Payment would in any case have been made only in requisitioned schillings, but not even this has been done.

In addition there is local interference. The Austrian textile industry in one zone is forbidden to receive from another zone potato starch which would cost 1.50 schillings per kilo and has to import Czechoslovak starch from Switzerland at 4 schillings a kilo. Hundreds of truckloads of potatoes stand today in one depot rotted by frost and rain because a local commander refused to let them leave his zone for hungry Vienna; at the same time he forbade the movement of milk, cutting Vienna children's scanty rations by six to eight thousand liters a day.

One could continue indefinitely to quote from what was revealed at the secret session. In effect, the Austrian

government, a coalition of the three parties—Catholic Volkspartei, Communists, and Socialists—said, "These are the facts—we are quite powerless." Parliament exculpated the government in a resolution which demanded of the Allies, among other things, that Austria alone should control the movement and sale of Austrian products at home and abroad. Next day, in public session, Eduard Heini, Minister of Commerce, announced that the Russians had seized 169 concerns, including 47 iron and metal works. A week later the Russians said that they had restored several of these as not being "German property," citing a vinegar factory, a small trading company, a thread factory, and two big estates—all "of no special economic value," according to the Socialist *Arbeiterzeitung*.

America and Britain are mainly blamed for insisting that some 400,000 D. P.'s, unwilling for one reason or other to return to their own countries, many of them foreign fascists, remain in Austria, where their presence diminishes the scanty rations. The disproportionate demands of military officers, especially Americans, for accommodation, when the war destruction makes whole Viennese families share one room, creates much ill-will. The British in Carinthia are criticized for seizing in summer almost all accommodations in the health resorts on the great Wörthersee and in winter moving back into the warmth of Klagenfurt, at the expense of the population of this overcrowded town. The Austrians do not object to the Americans and British staying as long as any occupying power does, but we should have no illusions that these armies are any longer popular. Austria is weary of all foreign armies; it considers that they devour its substance, make self-government a mockery, and arrest even its parliamentary deputies and high police officials for anything that looks like criticism of their policies.

The Allies, for their part, have no illusions that their armies are here to guard against a revival of Nazism or to help the Austrians; they know that they are here solely to watch and oppose one another. "Beat my Jew if you wish, and I'll beat yours in return," medieval land-owners are supposed to have said when differences arose between them. Today the Austrian inhabitants of the four zones say they have become the Jews of the respective occupying powers. The Viennese feel as baffled and angry when the Americans are unwilling to let UNRRA stores or Austrian livestock enter the Russian zone as they do when the British hold back Austrian steel in Styria, the Russians hold back Austrian oil in Zisterdorf, or the French mulct them of the milk, cheese, and butter of Tyrol and send it to France. Hunger strikes and demonstrations may break out at any moment among the enfeebled and despairing workers. One group alone is happy—the camouflaged Nazis, who lose no chance of whispering, "And wasn't Hitler right, as always?"

BOOKS *and the* ARTS

A UNISON

The grass is very green, my friend,
and tousled, like the head of—
your grandson, yes? And the mountain,
the mountain we climbed
twenty years since for the last
time (I write this thinking
of you) is saw-horned as then
upon the sky's edge—an old barn
is peaked there also, fatefully,
against the sky. And there it is
and we can't shift it or change
it or parse it or alter it
in any way. Listen! Do you not hear
them? the singing? There it is and
we'd better acknowledge it and
write it down that way, not otherwise.
Not twist the words to mean
what we should have said but to mean
—what cannot be escaped: the
mountain riding the afternoon as
it does, the grass matted green,
green underfoot and the air—
rotten wood. Hear! Hear them!
the Undying. The hill slopes away,
then rises in the middleground,
you remember, with a grove of gnarled
maples centering the bare pasture,
sacred, surely—for what reason?
I cannot say. Idyllic!
a shrine cinctured there by
the trees . . . a certainty of music!
a unison and a dance, joined
at this death's festival: Something
of a shed snake's skin, the beginning
goldenrod. Or, best, a white stone,
you have seen it: *Mathilda Maria*
Fox—and near the ground's lip,
all but undecipherable, *Aet Suae*,
Anno 9—still there, the grass
dripping of last night's rain—and
welcome! The thin air, the near,
clear brook water!—and could not,
and died, unable; to escape
what the air and the wet grass—
through which, tomorrow, the great sun
will rise bejeweled—the
unchanging mountains, forced on them—
and they received, willingly!
Stones, stones of a difference
joining the others at pace. Hear!
Hear the unison of their voices. . . .

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

DAVID TO BATHSHEBA

IN THE PUBLIC GARDEN

Worn out of virtue, as the time of year,
The burning City and its bells surround
The Public Garden. What is sound
Past agony is Fall:
The children crowding home from school at five,
Punting a football in the bricky air—
You mourn Uriah? If he were alive,
O Love, my age were nothing but the ball
Of leaves inside this lion-fountain, left
For witch and winter. . . . *Yet the leaves' complaint*
Is the King's fall . . . whatever suffers theft.
The Latin labels on the foreign trees are quaint.

The trees, for decades, shook their discontent
On strangers: rustling, rustling the Levant.
Uriah might have found the want
Of what was never his
A moment, found the falling colors welcome. . . .
But he was dead before Jehovah sent
Our shadows to the lion's cave. What's come
Is dancing like a leaf for nothing. Kiss:
The leaves are dark and harping. You observe
The shedding, park-bound mallards as they keep
Circling and craning for Uriah's sleep?
Driven, derided, Father, and my will a curve:

I knew these circles after Joab killed
Uriah in the shock of battle. Sharp
Arrows transfix me! You will harp
Of women? They are called
To succour Israel if his foot shall slide. . . .
I knew you from my roof-top: bubbles filled
Uriah's fountain, and we splashed. You died
In Adam, while the grass-snake slid appalled
To summer, while Jehovah's grass-green lyre
Was rustling all about us in the leaves
That gurgled by us, upside-down. *Earth grieves:*
Unspeakable the groanings when it catches fire!

The fountain's failing waters ring around
The garden. Love, if you had stayed my hand
Uriah would not understand
The lion's rush, or why
This stone-mouthed fountain laps us like a cat. . . .
And he is nothing after death but ground,
Anger and anguish, Love? And when we sat
The nights of summer out . . . perhaps, it took
Of Fall, the Fall? Perhaps. I live. I lie
Drinking our likeness from the water. Look:
The Lion's mane and age! Surely, I will not die.

ROBERT LOWELL

THE PLACE OF DEATH

"The wreath is plaited wicker: the green varnish
 Still traps, in its tarred pits, a race of gnats;
 The flowers in the fruit-jar fail—and vanish,
 Drying a stem for judgment. The outlandish
 Angel fixing a grey granite Bible
 With his red granite eyeballs; the red squirrel that squats
 In the black walnut with a wormy nut,
 Gnawing mechanically: these, the red
 And white and blue woodpecker hammering
 This light-pole, are enough to wake the dead—"

The living student walking with Spinoza
 In his thin freckled hand, has sometimes felt,
 Sinking upon a mound; the grassy airs,
 The wood and meadow of their comprehension,
 Have murmured to him, from the yellowing page,
 That all determination is negation—
 He has felt the boundaries of being fade,
 These long-outmoded, mounded, dewy modes
 Lapse to the seeding and inhuman Substance
 Whose infinite, unchanging, and eternal thought
 Is here extended in a thousand graves.
 These shining bodies—vagrant as a flaw
 Of the breath that, in the made, dead flower, mourns—
 Involved in their essences the little existence
 That survives their thought of it; in part denied
 But real, and hence perfect, they hunch here,
 A realm within a realm, the last contrary
 Being of all used, persisting things—
 Till the avenging angel sheathe his sword,
 Forget that he is guardian, and dream
 (His pocked head pillowed on the book of Life)
 The flower and the fruit-jar Victory,
 And these graves serving an eternal God
 That happiness itself, and final liberty
 Which (from the delta of the Alp-born Rhine)
 The dead Spinoza named necessity. . . .

But the squirrel flames within the flaming wood
 That soars above the poor mounds and their sigh:
 "The pity that made us was not womanish";
 But the gay bird hammers at the dying gnat—
 Whose wires bring to the peoples light and death;
 But the mourners gather for the dying gnat—
 The dancers sparkling in their mating cloud—
 And the sounds of the lens-grinder cease:
 The mourners and the mourned are one. Once more
 The great wind dances from the ends of Time
 To breathe upon these leaves the student drops,
 Napping an hour on this grassy grave.
 But the angel whispers from the leafy tomb,
He is not here—see, see, he is not here;
 But the leaves blow home to that inhuman kind
 Who play their lives out in the place of death
 And—dying, dying—from the unmourned grave
 Cry to him: "Only man is miserable."

RANDALL JARRELL

American Aesthete

THE AMERICAN SCENE. By Henry James. Edited, with an Introduction, by W. H. Auden. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$5.

NOW that "The American Scene" is reprinted, we may expect the astonishing book to be known and not only famed. It is worth many kinds of critical notice. Unprecedented in the annals of the Republic, for one thing, is such mastery of language as shows in the effortless long lift of its style. Revisiting Concord, the "restless analyst" ponders the felicities of the place, and moves piously through the historical associations, but is brought up sharply by another and, to our notion, a meaner thought:

Beyond even such broodings as these, and to another purpose, moreover, the communicated spell falls, in its degree, into that pathetic oddity of the small aspect, and the rude and the lowly, the reduced and humiliated above all, that sits on so many nooks and corners, objects and appurtenances, old contemporary things—contemporary with the doings of our race; simplifying our antecedents, our annals, to within an inch of their life, making us ask, in presence of the rude relics even of greatness, mean retreats and receptacles, constructionally so poor, from what barbarians or from what pigmies we have sprung.

We will feel that American writing can never be finer than this. The danger is that in too many quarters it may be too fine. In any noble writing which has entered securely into the national consciousness, the linguistic staple probably consists in a folk element of common sententious rhetoric. But here this element is dangerously reduced; it is at once overlaid and refined till it nearly loses visibility. For here in procession come the quick phrases, amplifying and correcting each other so briskly that we say this must be an example of the "qualified" style. To which we have to add immediately that, abounding in lively metaphors, this is also a case of the animated or "poetic" style. But the refinement, whether by the qualifications or the metaphors, is such as to escape us if we let attention relax ever so slightly; and as for the middling or untechnical sort of readers, this like others of James's later writings may be supposed, quite simply, not even to solicit their effort. It is very brilliant writing. But it is not writing with an epical quality; it is not of and for the people.

And consider the "thought" of the passage. It is of a piece with the style, and equally characteristic of the author; it will testify to his uncompromising claim for finery, and with it some elemental defect of temperament. The humble things of Concord, such as the Old Manse and the "rude bridge" and the natural objects that belong in the cluster, should be able to be embraced with all affection, and without any boggling, by a proper piety. The patriot, whom we may regard as a spontaneous and warm-hearted variety of the aesthetic man, cannot afford to be repelled by their rudeness and lowliness. Where else is their invincible "existential" quality, to which piety and art make it peculiarly their business to consent? We take the impression of James as of a man undone by his own fastidiousness, which holds him back from obtaining the blessing of reconciliation. But for com-

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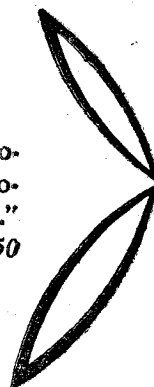
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tolerable and thus leave an imperishable foundation for generations to come." Over the radio in America his words seemed a kind of whistling in the dark. They did not seem to promise any specific kind of behavior. In Japanese eyes, however, they did. They promised a continuance of a behavior inculcated for centuries in Japan and expressed at Hiroshima when man by man and woman by woman they had "borne the unbearable" with patient fortitude. For the Japanese do not fight against circumstance; the bombing was a risk they had taken when they entered into war and "they had to expect it." Their duty is to fight weakness in themselves and to control their pain and personal sufferings. They do not have to reason why or to rail at a universe which requires such discipline. Westerners had doubted whether Japan could surrender; the Japanese knew that they could take capitulation with the same self-control the wounded and dying had showed at Hiroshima. If they could maintain such proprieties, they would not lose their self-respect in their own eyes.

RUTH BENEDICT

Russia, Russia!

THE GREAT CHALLENGE. By Louis Fischer. Duell, Sloan, and Pearce. \$4.

ONE might plunge right into the substance of this powerful and impassioned book by asking the question: What is the great challenge? "Hitler, Mussolini, and Hirohito challenged the democratic world," Louis Fischer says on page 329. "We smashed the challengers. Now Russia challenges the democratic world. This is the greatest challenge the democracies have ever confronted. It is a challenge to improve or succumb." I have chosen this quotation rather than a score of others because its last sentence indicates the philosophical base on which the author sincerely intends to rest his scathing criticism, his violent rejection of Russia and all that country's works, methods, and thoughts. In its implications of tragedy it discloses, too, in what I believe to be a defective manner, the nature of the choice before us.

I will say at once that I have no intention of trying to rebut the author's analysis of Russian developments. Stalin has undoubtedly incorporated nationalism into his Marxist philosophy, and the result has been both a sharpening of the international crisis and a source of confusion for the European left. But the author constantly overplays the importance of this nationalism. For had the revolution developed in accordance with its early promise, the opposition in the West, supposing the present or another equally grave crisis to exist, might very well be sharper than it is. Moreover, the Soviets would still be in a position to "exploit," to use the author's word, the real needs of men. As Louis Fischer is fully aware, those needs antedate the Russian Revolution and the form it has taken. The fact is that, in considerable measure, it is the economic message of the Soviet Union, in conjunction with its emergence to power, that awakens hostility. Its forms and its means often confuse and divide, but there was always a specter haunting Europe.

Basically Louis Fischer's values remain the same; yet in all that he has written since his revulsion from Russia I have been astonished at the increasing parsimony with which

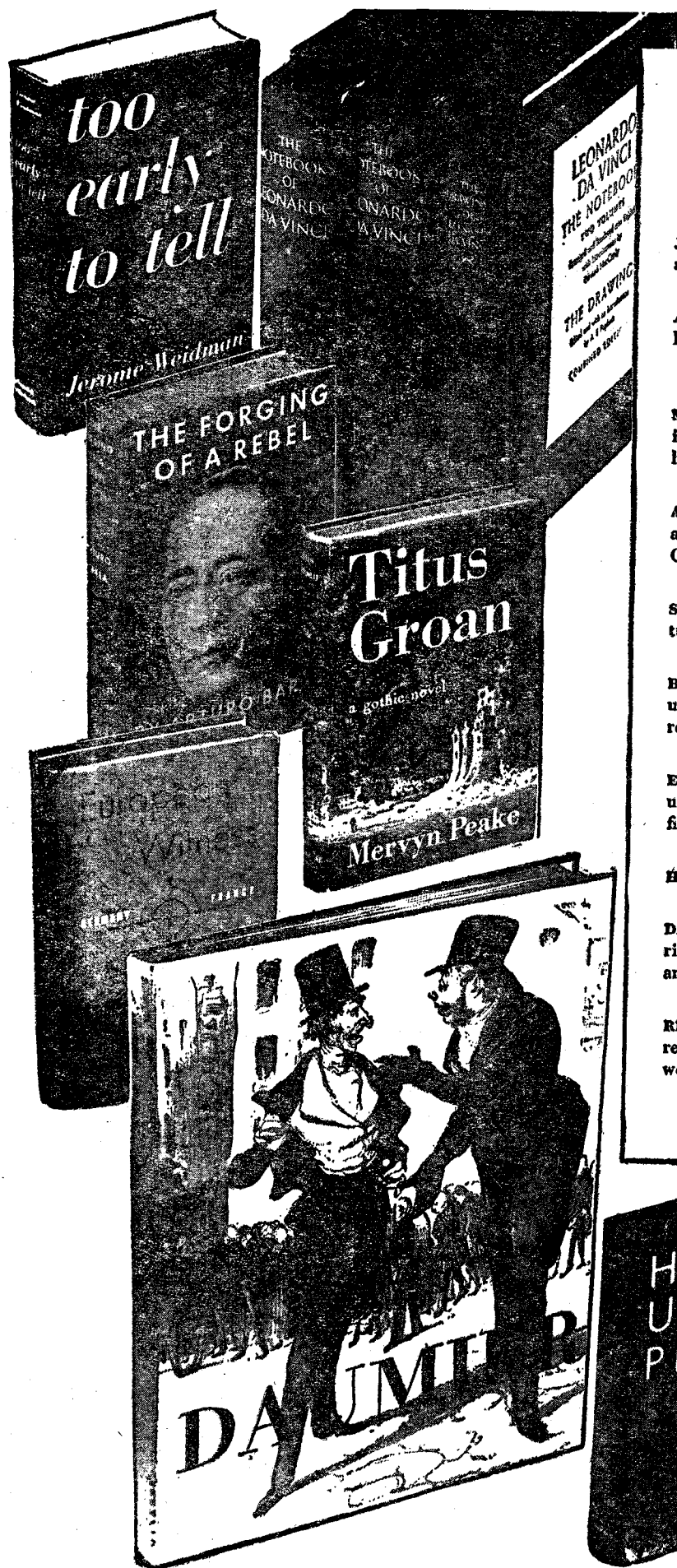
he uses the social philosophy which he sincerely believes himself to believe. Take, for example, his formulation of what he regards as the correct policy for the Western powers. On page 335 he rejects the proposal to fight Russia now. He scorns appeasement of the U. S. S. R. because he says it will compel us to fight that country later on. His own policy is described in these words, "Block Russia's territorial expansion by an effective international organization and block Russia's ideological expansion by increasing the contentment and cohesion of the countries in her path."

At first sight this appears to be a socialist version of "Stop Russia." The old Louis Fischer would have been very quick to say that a policy of stopping Russia "by an effective international organization" runs a great danger of becoming one of building an international organization in such a way that it will stop Russia and everything else on the left. That is what is likely to happen; what is happening. The intention of the Stop Russia powers is all too clear. It is to use the United Nations in exactly the way the League of Nations was used, as an instrument not only for checking Russian expansion but for stabilizing and even extending those empires which Louis Fischer believes constitute a major cause of war.

As things are now, there is no such thing as an ideal Stop Russia policy; there is just one policy conditioned and characterized by the nature of the social forces it most naturally rallies to itself. That the liberal forces which have committed themselves to the present conservative leadership of the United States will be able to modify the major aspect of the present policy, I cannot believe. Nothing in the mathematics of probability and nothing in the history of the inter-war period encourages that hope. The contents of the book itself seem to support me. One can register a dissent from imperialism very impressively by writing about India as Louis Fischer does. But the indignant expression of dissent is no substitute for a close and extensive survey of the general problem. For all its vehemence "The Great Challenge" provides no clear picture of the real world of politics within which the struggle for Louis Fischer's values goes on. Indeed, because this book presents no systematic analysis of Western policy but concentrates by far the greater part of its fire on the Soviet Union, it is rather worse than a passionate abstraction. A foreign policy truly expressing socialist intentions will not consist of measures universally acceptable to the right plus a protestant rider. Louis Fischer's jockey, who wears the colors of civil liberty, is an excitable and voluble idealist, but his mount is out of control.

"The Great Challenge" contains little about issues that once agitated its author deeply. There is almost nothing about Spain, for example. To be exact, there is one sustained half-page on Spain, in which Louis Fischer rejects the idea of an armed invasion to liberate that country. Why this shying away from the question? Is it that the author fears communism in Spain also? And why the unsatisfactory reference to Greece? And why, in a section that discusses the Far East almost wholly in terms of Stop Russia, does he dismiss consideration of Chiang Kai-shek's regime by what I can only call a frivolous anecdote?

In his section on India the author has pointed out the strategic reasons for Britain's maintenance of the puppet princedoms. They are there to prevent revolts within India,



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to break up the areas of disaffection. What, then, is the significance of our tolerance of Spanish fascism? What does Mr. Fischer suppose is the meaning of our mustering of reactionary powers? He may say that London and Washington have not organized an anti-Soviet bloc. Alas, the case is then far worse, for one must ask why of themselves these powers gravitate toward us. In "Men and Politics" Louis Fischer defended himself against the unmade charge that, despite serious misgivings, he had withheld criticism of Russia because it might have damaged the struggle in Spain. Can it be that he is now unconsciously withholding criticism of Western policies because it might damage the struggle against Russia?

So, too, when we turn to the internal social scene, "The Great Challenge" is deficient. There is still no thoroughgoing analysis of the problem of European reconstruction. The author does not seriously examine the political situation in terms of parties and classes. That a Stop Russia policy in the hands of conservative states must bring reactionary interests toward power the author is aware. But it is not a problem which he is willing to examine in concrete terms; perhaps because it leads to the very brink of a horrifying abyss. There is just one brief phrase in which he admits that in such countries as France and Italy the Socialists and Communists must work together to defeat these reactionaries. It is a negative approach, and there is consequently no realization that these parties must do this by evolving a contractual program designed to further socialist transformation.

Here, I believe, is the source of Louis Fischer's trouble. There is an either-or division within the heart of man, and it is common to all effort in every sphere. To surmount it is extremely difficult. Within socialism it takes the form of a conflict between civil liberty and effective social change. Democratic processes do not necessarily guarantee that man will react reasonably to the real world. An election may return to power a Stop Russia party with very little interest in the common welfare. Fearing this, impatient at it, feeling that they must exteriorize their aggressions, many Socialists are attracted to dictatorial methods because they offer a new dynamism. The result is that the socialism they achieve or support remains lifeless: the blood of freedom has gone from it. There is probably no real solution to the dichotomy. For my part I think socialism needs the parliamentary system to be worth while and effective; yet I am aware that in many countries, such as Spain, a minimal approach to the vast problem of social reform itself endangers parliamentarianism.

It is a dilemma which lies at the root of all socialist efforts. The tendency, sensed or unsensed, is to swing between the two poles of longing for concrete change and longing for the safeguards of democracy. Formerly Louis Fischer, though a democrat, looked without excessive harshness on revolution and Communist dictatorship, because of his desire for concrete social change. Now, fearing dictatorship, he swings toward civil liberty and appears less eager for the concrete changes that would give civil liberty real substance. That is why, haunted as he is by the threatened doom of Western civilization, he urges, not radical transformation, but "improvements" and "an increase of contentment and cohesion."

RALPH BATES

An Intolerable Confusion

A HISTORY OF AMERICAN POETRY, 1900-1940. By Horace Gregory and Marya Zaturenska. Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$4.

IT IS difficult to say how much is wrong with this book because there is so much that is wrong and the wrongness is of so many different kinds. Although it is a history, the errors of fact are not as important as the triviality of detail: one learns that William Carlos Williams was born on September 17, 1883, William Butler Yeats made a speech in Chicago on March 1, 1914, and a poem by Allen Tate appeared in the winter, 1944, issue of the *Kenyon Review*. And to speak of the wrongness of judgment is difficult too, since this may be said to be merely a matter of opinion. Nevertheless, it is the opinion of one reader that the Gregorys indulge in a systematic wrongness of praise and dispraise. Most of the important and famous poets of the period consistently receive the damnation of faint praise; and at the same time minor, mediocre, and bad poets are equally damned by being overpraised. Most difficult of all to make clear is the margin of inexactness involved in the Gregorys' use of comparison. Comparison is an invaluable tool of criticism; but in the Gregorys it is a desperate infatuation. They are moved by some kind of free association which makes them bring forth *any* comparison; and the more far-fetched the comparison, the more they appear to be delighted with it.

For example, the narrative poems of Edwin Arlington Robinson are entitled a "Comédie Humaine," although few authors resemble each other as little as Balzac and Robinson, and few narrative poets lack to such an extent the comprehensiveness and the variety which such a term as the human comedy signifies. In the same way Robert Frost is named "the Horace of our day" and endowed with a "Horatian serenity." The inexactness here is a complicated one which becomes clear only when one remembers that Frost might have been just as fruitfully compared to Vergil, to Wordsworth, to Emerson, and to Robinson. Equally fantastic is the comparison of W. H. Auden to Lovelace on the basis of a resemblance of stanza forms and the single occurrence of such "Freudian" words as "wombs" and "tombs." With like justice Karl Shapiro is said to resemble William Saroyan, a comparison which shows itself in a true light if one declares that William Saroyan resembles Karl Shapiro. And T. S. Eliot, who is entitled "the Twentieth-Century Man of Feeling," whatever that may mean, is compared to Delacroix: "how well, how appropriately," say the Gregorys, "Eliot's tigers and leopards would appear in company with Delacroix's lions and Arabs!" Any other painter of lions might have done as well; and as for tigers, presumably the Gregorys refer to Eliot's phrase "Christ the tiger," which, given their habits of association, makes one curious as to how when they thought of Delacroix's lions they forgot "Mary had a little lamb."

Inaccurate and bewildering as this use of comparison is, it might not matter so much if the Gregorys did not use comparisons as a means of insinuating judgments of value. There is nothing here that can quite equal Mr. Gregory's

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comparison, in a review in the *New Masses*, of Yvor Winters to Adolf Hitler on the basis of a resemblance Mr. Gregory had discovered between Hitler's paintings and Winters's lyrics; but there is much that comes fairly close. John Gould Fletcher's poetry is inflated in value by being termed "post-impressionism," which presumably suggests Cézanne; but then, as soon as the reader attempts to see what this can mean, he finds that, for the Gregorys, Fletcher's "Color Symphonies" were attempts to capture "the feeling, the spirit, the mood of post-impressionism in music and in painting." Now if the "Color Symphonies" are influenced by anything, they are influenced by *impressionism*, but if we are going to compare Eliot to Delacroix, we might as well confound Manet with Cézanne and make believe that both are indistinguishable from Debussy.

It is when they move at great speed from a comparison to a judgment that the Gregorys are most fascinating of all. The wit of one poet is so fine, we are told, that we must go back to the eighteenth century to find his equal. We are not told how to get by Lord Byron's wit, although on the other hand the Gregorys appear to know of Byron, at least in name, since they call Auden "a latter-day Byron" not long before they forget this characterization for the sake of the comparison to Lovelace—unless, that is, they think Byron resembles Lovelace. It turns out that Louis Untermeyer is not only "a romantic traditionalist," in which respect we learn that he resembles Mark Van Doren and Robert Hillyer, but Untermeyer's translations of Heine will "probably remain the most impressive tribute to Heine's memory that the present

century will yield." The prudence of "probably" is admirable, for otherwise the Gregorys would have no guard against what may happen in the remaining fifty-four years of the century. Unfortunately, here there is a solid ground of fact; Untermeyer's translations are bad in the plain sense that they are inaccurate, and this has been demonstrated with ease a number of times. To harp on it would be unjustifiable, were it not that it is characteristic of the disproportionate attention the Gregorys often give to works, such as Untermeyer's translations, which deserve nothing but silence; just as they waste space on many varieties of irrelevance, especially pointless quotation, going so far at one point as to quote the entire newspaper notice of the death of John Wheelwright, and elsewhere remarking on who received a Guggenheim and in what year.

If one had to choose a sample of what is most typical of this book, the pages which deal with Archibald MacLeish might serve as well as a dozen other shocking excursions. Here we learn that critics were wrong to compare MacLeish's "Conquistador" to poems by Eliot and Pound: the true comparison is to Longfellow's "Evangeline," which is "the actual precedent for the flaws and merits of the poem." The Gregorys may or may not mean precedent, but since they cite the facts that both poems are in unusual meters and deal with the exotic, one might reflect endlessly on why they chose "Evangeline" rather than "Hiawatha." Nothing but direct quotation, however, can display the fatuity of some paragraphs and the Gregorys' difficulty in using words correctly: "The coming of the Second World War created a new series of emergencies for Archibald MacLeish; in 1939 he received an honorary degree at Yale and was appointed Librarian of Congress." Here for the first time an honorary degree at Yale and the position of librarian have become emergencies. "Soon his activities placed him in the Office of Facts and Figures as well as in the Office of War Information, and though the first office was dissolved and the second had undergone changes which temporarily cast a shadow across MacLeish's career of political advancement, MacLeish's genius for diplomacy was rewarded." Here perhaps the sympathetic reader will concede a reason for the reference to emergencies in the first quotation; and here for the first time he will learn that MacLeish's political career in Washington was marked by genius, which was rewarded rather than shunted from post to post. "In accepting these responsibilities and honors MacLeish followed the footsteps of James Russell Lowell as minister to Spain . . . and ambassador to Great Britain."

Again comparison is irresistible to the Gregorys. But the citation of Lowell is not enough. Another precedent is necessary: ". . . still another precedent for MacLeish's activities may be found in the career of John Hay (1838-1905), the author of 'Pike County Ballads' (1871)." Hay and MacLeish are both poets, and that is precedent enough: no two poets are more unlike, but both are diplomats; although MacLeish never became Secretary of State, he "probably" was willing to follow in the footsteps of his precedent. In the next sentence the Gregorys make use of their most precious source of comparison, the incomparable phrase "not unlike," which can be used to bring any two things together: "Not unlike MacLeish's, John Hay's early training was in

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law; he was an assistant private secretary to President Lincoln, and he closed a distinguished career in diplomatic services as Secretary of State in Theodore Roosevelt's Administration. A future historian may discover that John Hay's anonymously published novel, 'The Bread-Winners,' which appeared serially in the *Century* magazine from August, 1883, to January, 1884. . . ." The dates are given, no doubt, so that, if one wants, one can try to get copies in second-hand periodical stores. And one must also remark upon the circumspection of the phrase "a future historian may discover." "The Breadwinners" was the true ancestor of MacLeish's political verses; Vernon Louis Parrington treated the novel harshly, yet MacLeish, in his satires, seems to stand for 'educated leadership'. . . . Upon the death of Stephen Vincent Benét, MacLeish also assumed the responsibility of editing the 'Yale Series of Younger Poets.' " It is untrue that MacLeish's political verses have any connection with Hay's novel; and it is impossible to make out what the grammatical connection can be between Parrington's judgment and MacLeish's stand for educated leadership. And if anyone wants to know what conceivable relevance the foregoing quotation has to American poetry, the answer is that it has practically as much relevance as practically anything else one may say about a poet, provided that it has little to do with the nature of his poetry.

The ineptitude of the detailed discussions is obviously such that the reader tends to forget what is *merely* absent: a coherent point of view, a sense of cultural and social history, and an analysis of poetic techniques. As to point of view, the Gregorys say that their "intention is to present a history of American poetry which is humane in its interest rather than humanitarian"; after some reflection, it is possible to guess that whatever the Gregorys may mean by scorning a humanitarian interest (one possibility is that they intend to flee from social analysis), it is extremely likely that the vagueness of what they mean by "humane" can be reduced by supposing that they have confused it with "humanist," and adding the connotation of "gossip." American poetry between 1900 and 1940 is a rich subject and a complex one: it might well be studied purely as a development of techniques; or one might record the influence of social crisis and cultural change upon the sensibility of individual poets; or one might study the most important schools or the most representative poets. The Gregorys have done none of these things with thoroughness, exactness, or justice. They merely have mixed up the several possible methods of dealing with the subject, and they have produced what must be called an intolerable confusion.

DELMORE SCHWARTZ

Slaves and a Sophist

THE SERVILE STATE. By Hilaire Belloc. With an Introduction by Christian Gauss. Henry Holt and Company, \$2.50.

ONE often gets, or at least I do, more enlightenment about present society from the non-progressive thinkers of the past century than from the liberals and Marxists. The skeptical and pessimistic spirit of the former, from De Tocqueville to Weber, freed them from doctrinaire illu-

sions and opened more profound insights than the progressive tradition permitted; even the genius of Marx was hobbled by that tradition.

At first glance this reissue of a book written in 1912 by a leading Catholic historian seems to be a case in point. Belloc excoriates capitalism with Marxian vigor and in surprisingly Marxian terms. In addition, his nostalgia for the Middle Ages made him see what few Marxists of that time saw: that industrial progress and collectivism were, in fact, not leading toward socialism but toward something very different; and that decentralization was a major requirement of advance toward a better society. A remark like the following seems acute in the light of the present nationalization program in England: "Who can imagine that if, say, two of our great industries, coal and railways, were handed over to the state tomorrow, the armies of men organized therein would find any change of character of their lives, save in some increase of security and possibly in a very slight increase of earnings?"

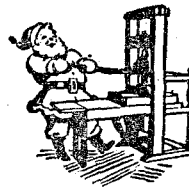
The more one reads in the book, however, the more one realizes that Belloc's central thesis is spectacularly unsound; and since the book is no more than a scholastic elaboration of this thesis, there is nothing much left once it collapses. Belloc states his thesis in one sentence on page 101: "The capitalist state breeds a collectivist theory which *in action* produces something utterly different from collectivism: to wit, the servile state." This might appear unexceptionable enough, in the light of the Russian experience, except that Belloc's definition of the "servile state" is not what one might expect. Taking the instability and non-viability of capitalism for granted, Belloc outlines three possible future solutions:

(a) Collectivism, or the placing of the means of production in the hands of the political officers of the community.

(b) Property, or the reestablishment of a distributive state, in which the mass of citizens should severally own the means of production.

(c) Slavery, or a servile state, in which those who do not own the means of production shall be legally compelled to work for those who do, and shall receive in exchange a security of livelihood.

Although he affects a "hard-boiled" scientific neutrality, Belloc's personal choice is clearly for the second alternative: a society of small farmers, merchants, and artisans owning their own means of production and exchanging their products on a free market—something like Jefferson's ideas, or Proudhon's. But he rightly points out that although this solution is logically conceivable, it seems historically unlikely, since the trend of capitalism is toward centralization. The main argument of his book is that this trend will result not in collectivism, as the Socialists expect, but in the "servile state." By this striking phrase Belloc does *not* mean—as the jacket blurb states and as Mr. Gauss's rather woolly introduction seems to imply—what critics of socialism from Herbert Spencer on have meant: regimentation by a state bureaucracy, which replaces the private capitalist as owner and exploiter. Rather does he mean, as he is at pains to repeat several dozen times in the course of a short book—his style, like Stalin's, has the repetitious, catechism quality of the theological seminary—a society in which a small number of private capitalists force the non-owning masses to work



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for them by direct legal compulsion. Now it must be clear to a child—to write like the author—that just the opposite has happened. We have the state everywhere taking from private capitalism. Even in this country the state is more powerful economically and private business less so than they were twenty years ago. Throughout Europe basic industries are being nationalized, the bourgeoisie is vanishing as a significant social force, and while there are plenty of indications of the growth of servile relations, they are not arising on Belloc's basis. ("That state is not servile in which *all* citizens . . . must labor at the discretion of state officials.") The nationalization of industry which he proves in detail cannot ever take place in England is now coming about. As for Russia: in the preface to the 1927 edition Belloc writes, "I have not modified the sentence in which I say that state collectivism can show no working example, for the Russian Revolution . . . has *not* produced a collectivist state; on the contrary, it has produced a state the vast bulk of which—some nine-tenths—have, by it, been confirmed as peasant-holders." It was a brave bit of casuistry, with just enough truth to be effective. The Old Guard dies but never surrenders. And death came a few years later when Stalin put through the forced-collectivization program.

How did Belloc come to adopt such a fantastically wrong-headed thesis, and to stick to it as late as 1927? That he is a superficial thinker is clear from the false-lucid rhetoric of his style: baby-talk for the intelligentsia. That he is a doctrinaire of the most irresponsible kind, handling ideas and data with the fine free sweep of an undergraduate debater, appears in the forty-page "historical digression" in which he traces the social and economic history of Europe from the Roman Empire to the Industrial Revolution, showing how everything good flowed from the Catholic church and everything bad from the pagan centuries before its rise and the Protestant centuries after its decline. As a doctrinaire, he saw private property as an eternal principle, for good or ill; and the superficiality of his intelligence enables him to stick to this in the face of all evidence. His book might still be of value had he not adopted an "objective" pose throughout, insisting that he is not using the term "servile" pejoratively, and that he is not concerned with inquiring as to "which form of society might reasonably be preferred." This pseudo-neutrality—for such it is, whether in Belloc or in Burnham—is a cheap rhetorical trick designed to persuade a scientific-minded audience. But once the thesis to be advanced thereby has been outmoded, very little is left. Had Belloc frankly tried to show the virtues of his "distributive" society and why it should "reasonably be preferred" to other societies, his book might still be to the point today. As it is, it would seem he outsmarted himself. DWIGHT MACDONALD

Homo Faber, Homo Magus

THE MYTH OF THE STATE. By Ernst Cassirer. Yale University Press. \$3.75.

IN HIS "Myth of the State" the late Ernst Cassirer has provided an illuminating survey of some major texts in the history of political theory, such as Plato's "Republic," Machiavelli's "Prince," the doctrine of the "social contract,"

Carlyle on hero-worship, Hegel's metaphysics of the state, and so on. The exposition is keen and clear, well reflecting the author's thorough grounding in philosophy. A reader shown over the field by such a guide can consider himself well guided indeed.

The political "myth"—there is no talk of "ideology"—is here placed in terms of a dualistic distinction between the "magical" and the "semantic." The "magical" use of language, we are told, "tries to produce effects and to change the course of nature," while the "semantic" serves to "describe things or relations of things."

The historians of human civilization have told us that mankind in its development had to pass through two different phases. Man began as *homo magus*; but from the age of magic he passed to the age of technics. The *homo magus* of former times and of primitive civilization became a *homo faber*, a craftsman and artisan. If we admit such an historical distinction our modern political myths appear indeed as a very strange and paradoxical thing. For what we find in them is the blending of two activities that seem to exclude each other. The modern politician has had to combine in himself two entirely different and even incompatible functions. He has to act, at the same time, as both *homo magus* and *homo faber*.

Much valuable insight is got through this approach. Yet it may cause contemporary doctrines of political motivation to seem somewhat more "strange and paradoxical" than need be. For although there are aspects of language that cannot be comfortably reduced to either the "magical" or the "semantic," when we have but these two bins whatever cannot be classed as "semantic" must be classed as "magical." As a result, with so much disturbing evidence of reversion to savagery in the modern world, we are invited to conclude that there is even more.

What seems to be missing in this study of political "myth" is a systematic concern with the functions of speech that fall under the traditional heading of "rhetoric." When one human agent sets other human agents in motion, for instance, by calling for help, such a persuasive use of words is not sheer magic spell, as with the attempt to coerce physical nature by incantatory means. Nor is it quite the semantic use of language to "describe things or relations to things." It is the motive that goes into rhetoric.

True, it may be greatly misused, as with race doctrines designed to promote social cooperation for sinister ends. But in itself it is a normal and proper function of words. Being hortatory rather than descriptive, it would fall outside the "semantic" bin; yet its essentially realistic nature, when properly used, would make it a bad fit for the "magical" bin. If we give it a bin of its own—the category of the "rhetorical," with a systematically generated set of terms to round out the analysis—we can study its ways shrewdly enough, but without so many extremely discouraging incentives to believe that presumably civilized populations are running around with rings in their noses.

Technically, the dualistic approach here seems to get an important aspect of language turned backward. For if there is any sort of real experience motivating primitive magic, it must be rooted in the fact that one person's expressions, commands, and requests, when interpreted by other persons,

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really can produce desired effects. Error arose when men transferred the use of the verbal instrument to areas where it does not belong, as when trying by incantation to influence natural things that do not understand language. But if, as with the Cassirer dualism, you begin with natural magic, the hortatory use of language to influence human conduct seems derivative from this derived magical use, rather than existing in its own right. Hence verbal inducement, even in the sphere of human communication, is treated roundabout, as a "social magic" that descends from natural magic. The point is worth stressing because it is characteristic of much modern theory, with its tendency to define human motives by matching science against some antithetical term.

But whether or not the modern political "myth" might be approached more directly, and with less distressing implications, than in "The Myth of the State," there is much of great moment to be observed about it when viewed in the Cassirer perspective, which considers it primarily as a mixture of bad poetry and bad science. For large areas of it are just exactly that. And much of the book is an apt summary of works in their own terms. KENNETH BURKE

A Philosopher Fallen Among Anthropologists

THE THEORY OF HUMAN CULTURE. By James Feibleman. Duell, Sloan, and Pearce. \$5.

IT IS not in the nature, tradition, outlook, or techniques of philosophy to make any significant contribution to the social sciences by way of subject matter or method. We can, however, legitimately expect philosophy to supply generalizations of a higher order that can lead to more precise insights. We have the right to expect, moreover, that higher orders of generalization prove their usefulness, and not remain exercises of translation into philosophical lingo of well-established facts or relations more simply described in the social sciences. It is in the light of this anticipation that we approach Mr. Feibleman's effort, and in the light of its specific failure that we must register disappointment. No new knowledge comes out.

The author tells us that he will employ ontology, the study of being, as an instrument of analysis and discovery. What he actually does is begin with the basic drives of feeding, breeding, and inquiry—otherwise known as hunger, love, and curiosity. One could debate at length the merits of his selection of primary drives, but to no purpose. Ontology, the author says, exists in social groups in the beliefs which its members hold in common; and since these beliefs are maintained implicitly, the formula for any culture is the implicit dominant ontology, "i. d. o." for short. The i. d. o. has, in addition to an ideational content, an affective one which Mr. Feibleman calls the "ethos."

One has no right to quarrel with the particular constructs an author wishes to use to manipulate his data. In this anarchic age each investigator considers it his sacred obligation to invent constructs never used before. This fashion prevails in all the social sciences, where recurrent phenomena cannot be defined in terms of a precise and delimiting uni-

versal language like mathematics. This confusion is a nuisance to be endured, but it is not of the essence.

The test of any such formulation lies in whether its use is accompanied by any novel or precise techniques. These are conspicuously absent from the book. The author's formulas are accompanied only by some undisciplined psychologizing. What emerges is a formulation of the Nietzsche-Spengler variety, another version of the culture pattern which we have long since known, but whose usefulness has become altogether inadequate to the needs of our time. Where does the culture pattern come from? The author gives us the customary answer: from the problems of adaptation.

No one today takes these general answers seriously. What is urgently needed is not a higher abstraction of conclusions long known in the social sciences but an instrument for the more precise analysis of the minutiae and dynamics of adaptation—individual and social.

As illustrations for this thesis the author uses the Baiga—from the published account of Verrier Elwin—and the English nation. The two analyses are equally unsatisfying. One subject in the book, the analysis of common sense, receives excellent treatment throughout, except for the fact that the author fails to recognize that common sense involves a great deal of "natural" psychologizing.

The reviewer believes the author has mistaken the temper of our time. The study of culture is no longer an academic subject; it is every man's highly personal business. There is a great hunger for new information on human culture which this book offers little to satisfy. What is needed is not new theories about what was known a generation ago but new data, new techniques, and new types of demonstration that are empirical, not authoritarian.

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LILLIAN HELLMAN'S "Another Part of the Forest" (Fulton Theater) is the story of four scoundrels, two half-wits, one insane woman, and a whore. "Tobacco Road" had better look to its laurels, for though the characters in the present play dress better and wash more often it is still quite the fruitiest picture of depravity seen in years. Miss Hellman's ability to imagine dirty tricks and nasty speeches is unrivaled in the contemporary theater, and there can be no question of the theatrical virtuosity which enables her to extract from each all the ugliness it can possibly yield. By comparison "The Little Foxes" will have to be ranked as an idyl and "The Children's Hour" be dismissed as mere prentice work written before its author had learned how to get along without the disturbing intrusion of good-will on the part of any of her characters. If, as I am inclined to suspect, other spectators beside myself began to feel toward the end of the evening a certain disposition to titter, that was less because of any technical defect in the writing than simply because total depravity has a way of beginning to seem funny when exhibited for too long and completely without foil. Neither Commodus, Heliogabalus, Lucretia Borgia, nor Jeeter Lester is a comic character, but all have a way of turning into just that.

For our benefit the play details the earlier history of the family first introduced in "The Little Foxes." The founder of the clan is a conscious scoundrel who reads Aristotle or listens to chamber music during the rare moments when he is not foreclosing mortgages, bullying his insane wife, or taunting his two blackhearted sons with the helplessness which he imposed upon them. There is something rather Dickensian in the completeness as well as the complacency of his villainy, and if he were disposed of in the end by someone on the side of the angels the total effect would probably be not unlike that of a Victorian melodrama. Actually, however, he gets his come-uppance at the hands of the eldest son, and so, though one villain is foiled, there is no virtue to triumph.

I am not unaware of the fact that all this is supposed to have, for the initiated, a meaning. It is, that is to say, a Marxian study of the decline of the

Southern feudal aristocracy and the rise of the capitalist exploiter. There are no admirable characters because, by antecedent premise, there cannot be any. Dying aristocrats must be dim-witted and rising capitalists must be villainous because otherwise the dialectic process could not have taken place as it did. Even the fact that the scoundrels seem somewhat more likable than their victims is precisely according to formula, since capitalism, though evil in itself, advances the dialectic process one stage beyond feudalism and is to that extent more admirable. But none of this is pointed out explicitly in the play itself, and I suspect that most of even the initiated will disregard it in order to join with the innocent in getting what fun they can out of a play in which dog bites dog, and bitch snarls at bitch for two hours and a half during which no spectator need ever remember that any of the virtues exist except in the futile imaginations of the insane or the half-witted.

The last scene, in which the father signs over all his power to the son who has found, conveniently written down in a family Bible, evidence which would send the old villain to the gallows, seems to me curiously feeble and much in the manner of what was called in my youth the ten-twenty-thirty. Up to that time, however, the play had not only been more expertly written than any of its author's previous works but also well acted and superbly directed. If, nevertheless, it fails to move me to great enthusiasm, it is because I no more believe its picture of unrelieved villainy than I believe novels of the Pollyanna school. And I wonder that the author is not herself a little disconcerted by the fluency of her imagination when she sets it to working along certain lines. Max Beerbohm was, I remember, when he discovered how easily he composed the "Insults" section of a Complete Letter Writer he once thought of putting forth.

Maxwell Anderson's "Joan of Lorraine" (Alvin Theater) is, though for very different reasons, likely to achieve almost as much success as Miss Hellman's piece. Its elaborate scheme, by means of which various characters are permitted to comment on the significance of Joan of Arc during the course of the rehearsal of a play about her, is ingeniously managed and well sustained. Perhaps because Mr. Anderson has been taken to task so often of recent years by critics who complained of turgidity and pretentiousness, the prose of the present



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work is straightforward enough and sensible enough. But the whole seemed to me something which could, with uncomfortable accuracy, be described as Shaw and water. A good many things in "St. Joan" have been left out, including, for example, the hard-boiled conclusion that heretics cannot be distinguished from saints until after they have been burned. Nevertheless, most of what "Joan of Lorraine" says about faith, Shaw seems to me to have said first. Ingrid Bergman plays the leading role

with a certain wholesome, well-scrubbed charm and is, indeed, almost too far removed from the usual Hollywood glamour girl not to suggest sensible shoes and pigtails, but I can hardly follow most of my colleagues in hailing her as a great actress. The presence of hordes of movie fans who Oh'd and Ah'd like fond parents at a school play whenever they thought their favorite was being cute made both the play and the performance somewhat hard to judge.

Films

JAMES
AGEE

What Hollywood Can Do

THE BEST YEARS OF OUR LIVES," a misfired title, seems to have started as a gleam in Samuel Goldwyn's eye when he saw in a mid-war issue of *Time* a picture and article about returning veterans. At a later stage it was a verse novel by MacKinlay Kantor called "Glory for Me"—not a very good title either. Robert E. Sherwood turned this into a screen play; the director William Wyler and the camera man Gregg Toland and a few hundred others turned the screen play into a movie. The movie has plenty of faults, and the worst of them are painfully exasperating; yet this is one of the very few American studio-made movies in years that seem to me profoundly pleasing, moving, and encouraging.

The story is of a sort that could have been, and often remains, just slick-paper fiction at its most sincere, and that could also have become, and occasionally suggests, a great and simple, limpid kind of fiction which few writers of serious talent seem able to attempt or even to respect, at present. An ex-bombardier (Dana Andrews), an ex-infantry sergeant (Fredric March), and an ex-sailor (Harold Russell) meet for the first time as they return to their home city, part to undertake the various pleasures and problems of their return, and meet again at various subsequent times as their lives and relationships shake down into new shape.

The bombardier, a highly intelligent proletarian, can find nothing better in the way of a job than his old place in a drugstore. He finds, too, that he and the girl he married just before he went overseas no longer get along. The sergeant, who was once the kind of nervously well-married, vocationless, rather sensitive business man, too good for his job, who tries to sweep along his uneasiness in a momentum of alcohol, clowning, fairly sophisticated wit, and his real but seldom focused affections, finds that none of that has changed for the better. He is made vice-president of his bank, in charge of G. I. loans, and spends a good deal of his time drunk. The sailor, who has lost both hands and has learned to use a pair of hooks quite well, returns to the gentlest and most touching depths of the lower middle class. His chief problem is the girl he

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had always expected to marry; another is his extreme uneasiness about everybody's attempt to be good about his hooks; a hideous complication is that he is at once intuitively very perceptive and sensitive, and hopelessly inarticulate, and that most of the people he returns to are equally well-meaning and unsophisticated.

At its worst this story is very annoying in its patness, its timidity, its slithering attempts to pretend to face and by that pretense to dodge in the most shameful way possible its own fullest meanings and possibilities. Perhaps one shouldn't kick too hard at a "mere" device, but I feel very dubious about the invention of a nice bar in which the veterans keep meeting each other, perhaps because I suspect that one of the dodged truths is that, once they become civilians again, most men of such disparate classes or worlds would meet seldom, with greater embarrassment than friendliness, and that the picture is here presenting, instead of the unhappy likelihood, a hopeful and barely plausible lie. I feel a good deal of interest in the love affair that develops between Andrews and the banker's daughter, played by Teresa Wright, but again they have made it easy for themselves by showing Andrews's wife to be a bag, and they atone for this convenience only in part by making her as well-meaning and sympathetic and essentially innocent as, in the terms invented for her, she could be. Thanks to much of the writing and all of the playing, this illicit affair is by implication remarkably real and mature; but in action, in the good old inevitable Sunday School way, the extra-marital activities are limited to a single Andrews-Wright kiss and a boy-friend, for Andrews's wife, lolling in his shirtsleeves; and it is the wife who asks for a divorce.

Or again, they pretend to hit the banker's predicament between the eyes, and allow him to tell off his careful world which doesn't want to make loans to veterans without collateral in a speech which, on the movie scale of things, is reasonably bold. They even have the firmness to let March have the last word on that issue; he says that with nearly every loan without collateral he will have to put up the same fight all over again. Yet one is emotionally left with the impression that he has cleverly and lovably won his fight and will win it on every subsequent occasion, and the hints that his own bread and butter are and will be increasingly in jeopardy if he keeps his courage are so discreet as to be all but inaudible. As a footnote

to this his boss, played by Ray Collins, is represented, not with the cool realism which could here have been so good and so nearly unprecedented in an American movie, but in the kind of skilful caricature which, like so much of Gilbert and Sullivan, makes every punch a kind of self-caress.

The only boss types represented cruelly are the manager and floor-walker of a chain drugstore—that is, men in a job predicament in which they are as much bullied as bullying; and it is not shown that they are bullied. The only business type who is represented with what seems like perfect justice is the father of the sailor's sweetheart, a specialized, fussy, feminine little man who nervously tries to badger the sailor about his plans for the future. Or for still another major fault—and here direction and playing are as much to blame as the script—the very interesting and, for movies, new character of the banker is only hinted at, not solidly presented. Only the psychologically sophisticated can gather from the film that his marriage is only nominally happy and is actually precarious, and that the people who made the movie may possibly be on to this; and March's benders, though extremely well done in their way, are staged with all but frantic gratitude as broad comic relief, as if professional entertainers who were also good artists were on these occasions very glad to betray their responsibilities as artists for the sake of getting a little bit of sure-fire—and commercially much-needed—fun into the show.

In fact, it would be possible, I don't doubt, to call the whole picture just one long pious piece of deceit and self-deceit, embarrassed by hot flashes of talent, conscience, truthfulness, and dignity. And it is anyhow more than possible, it is unhappily obligatory, to observe that a good deal which might have been very fine, even great, and which is handled mainly by people who could have done, and done perfectly, all the best that could have been developed out of the idea, is here either murdered in its cradle or reduced to manageable good citizenship in the early stages of grade school. Yet I feel a hundred times more liking and admiration for the film than distaste or disappointment.

[Mr. Agee's review of "The Best Years of Our Lives" will be concluded next week.]



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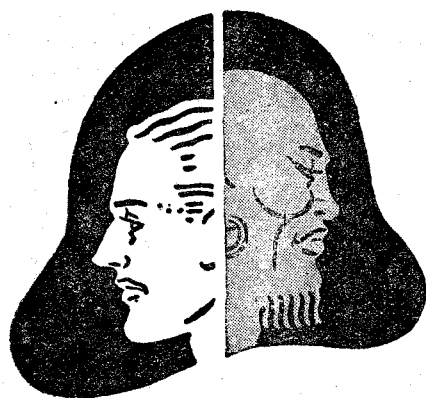
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Records

**B. H.
HAGGIN**

TECHNICHORD Records (90 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, Mass.) has issued a recording of Bach's Cantata No. 106, "Gotteszeit ist die allerbeste Zeit," performed by 21 members of the Harvard Glee Club and Radcliffe Choral Society and seven instrumentalists under the direction of G. Wallace Woodworth (Set T-6: 3 records; \$7.55). This is an early work of Bach, with a couple of slow movements that achieve at moments something of the power of his greatest choral writing, but with a great deal besides that I find unimpressive. I could imagine a performance with more sensuous beauty of sound and more subtlety of inflection; but this one is sufficiently agreeable to the ear and musically acceptable. Its over-all sound on the records is good; but there are times when the instruments sound near and the voices far away, and when the soprano line is blanketed by the other vocal lines. The red vinylite records allow one to hear the performance in quiet most of the time; but there is an occasional series of clicks; and there is the dust that must be cleaned out of the grooves before each playing (but at last I have learned of a compensating advantage of the red vinylite over the black: it is, according to an engineer who should know, harder than the black). The set is provided with a pocket-size full score of the cantata, with a sheet on which each line of the German text is given with the corresponding line of the English translation used in the performance, with notes on the work by Mr. Woodworth, and with instructions on the proper care of vinylite records. These permit the use of a pickup weighing up to two ounces; I advise against using one that weighs more than one ounce.

Columbia's December albums offer a good and well-recorded performance of the Mussorgsky-Ravel "Pictures at an Exhibition" by Rodzinski with the New York Philharmonic (Set 641; \$4.85); and music of Alec Wilder performed by a group of excellent C. B. S. musicians under the direction of Frank Sinatra, whose enthusiasm for the music I don't share (Set 637; \$3.85).

Victor has begun a "Heritage Series" of red vinylite pressings of recordings made by the legendary singers of the past. The first five records (\$3.50 each) offer beautiful performances of the Wil-

low Song and Ave Maria from Verdi's "Otello" by Alda (15-1000), and of *Eri tu* from Verdi's "Masked Ball" and *Dio possente* from Gounod's "Faust" by Ancona (15-1002); Tetrzzini's brilliant performance of the Polonaise from Thomas's "Mignon" and her unimpressive one of *Voi che sapete* from Mozart's "Figaro" (15-1001); the splendor of Caruso's voice in his 1911 performance of *Ab! fuyez, douce image* from Massenet's "Manon," and the darker magnificence, better recorded, of that voice in his 1920 performance of the famous aria from Halevy's "La Juive" (15-1004); and Journet's sonorous performances of two extremely uninteresting pieces of music, the *Piff! paff!* from Meyerbeer's "Huguenots" and *Au bruit lourd des marteaux* from Gounod's "Philemon et Baucis" (15-1003).

It is not for lack of appreciation of these performances that I am amazed and disappointed by Victor's failure to issue Hempel's recordings of *Der Hölle Rache* from Mozart's "Magic Flute" and *Deh vieni, non tardar* from his "Figaro," and John McCormack's of *Il mio tesoro* from Mozart's "Don Giovanni" and *Una furtiva lagrima* from Donizetti's "Elisir d'Amore" on these first records. It is rather because of the fact that these Hempel and McCormack performances are among the supreme examples of vocal and musical achievement, and that they should be brought to the attention of the public, which knows nothing about them and already knows about Caruso and Tetrzzini.

Let me point out, also, that our heritage includes other great performances which Victor should make available to the public again: the Kreisler-Rachmaninov performances of sonatas by Beethoven and Schubert; the Cortot-Thibaud-Casals performances of trios by Schubert, Beethoven, and Haydn. And there are the fine recordings that Victor stopped pressing during the war and has not yet begun to produce again.

There are no plant, materials, and labor for the Glyndbourne "Marriage of Figaro," but only for a volume of "Highlights from 'Madama Butterfly,'" well-sung by Albanese, Melton, and Lucielle Browning with an orchestra under Weissmann, and excellently recorded (Set 1068; \$3.85). And for a volume of the favorite vocal excerpts from "Carmen," well-sung by Swarthout, Albanese, Ramon Vinay, Merrill, other minor singers, and Robert Shaw's chorus with an orchestra under the direction of Leinsdorf. These performances are well recorded (Set 1078; \$7).

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Christianity and Poetry

Dear Sirs: Your reviewer, Robert Fitzgerald, is the only critic so far who has realized what was the main problem gnawing at me while I was writing "King Jesus": namely, how far can Jesus be historically as well as poetically identified with the doomed hero of the "one story and one story only" assumed in my poem, "To Juan at the Winter Solstice" (published in *The Nation* of July 6). In other words, is Christianity compatible with poetry? I am grateful to him for his generosity, since his point of view is plainly Catholic, in treating my presentation of the problem with such respect.

A few points to be corrected. I am not Welsh except by grace of serving with the Royal Welsh Fusiliers in the last war but one; but Scots-Irish on one side, grandson of Bishop Graves of Limerick, the antiquarian and mathematician, and German-Danish on the other, grand-nephew (not grandson) of Leopold von Ranke, the father of modern history.

The "cultist" survival in Palestine is not one of my assumptions but an unshakable historical fact; I recommend Mr. Fitzgerald to read Sozomen, the Byzantine ecclesiastical historian, on the primitive goings-on at Hebron, an original center of Judaism, which were suppressed by the Emperor Constantine—yes, "a mysticism to do with oak trees" and concerned with the patriarchs buried in the cave of Machpelah.

The "late and propagandist Gospel of St. John" does contain, as emphasized, a submerged Aramaic original, the historical details of which are essential to the understanding of the Gospel story.

I will leave Mr. Fitzgerald to argue the meaning of *Amen* with the Hebraists. The view I quote is the most recent. Jesus seems to have been the first to preface his statements with this word, which had hitherto been used only as a final clinching in God's name of religious sentiments.

Aholah and Aholibah are personifications of Jerusalem and Samaria, because the cult of Anatha, the Juno with a lion, was centered at Jerusalem, that of Ashima, a Minerva with a dove, was centered at Samaria; the Jews accused the Samaritans of Ashima-worship in very late times. Ezekiel referred to Aholibah and Aholah as Jehovah's wives;

and meant it, as the Elephantine temple records—read in the light of the analogical cult of the Syrian trinity at Hierapolis—prove. Lucian's "De Dea Syria" is of paramount importance in this context.

About Jesus and Lazarus. Jesus himself said that Lazarus was not physically dead but only in a trance; nevertheless, when he delayed his coming and Lazarus was officially committed to the grave, a life was required in payment for the restoration. The flaw in poetic logic with which I am charged—namely, that Jesus did not in fact pay with his own life—is not a flaw: I make it clear that Judas, repenting of his disobedience, paid the debt on Jesus's behalf—not by the knife or water or the sword but by hanging, a death that would necessarily give him over to Sheol, because of the Deuteronomic curse.

Yes, Judas, the only true Jew among the twelve disciples, the rest being Galileans, was of superior intelligence. This is proved by his asking thirty shekels from the Temple Treasurer: it showed that he understood exactly what prophecy Jesus was trying to fulfil. If he had asked fifty or three hundred he would have been in the same class as his fellows, whose eyes had been blinded and ears stopped.

I apologize for the shortness of the "Historical Commentary"; this defect will be repaired in my "White Goddess," to be published next year, a full-length study of "The Female" against whom Jesus declared war, and of her rebellious sons.

St. John's Gospel as we have it is second-century Gnostic. Gnosticism is a fantastic theological muddle compared with the fine Apocalyptic literalness of Jesus.

ROBERT GRAVES

Deya, Mallorca, Spain, October 28

The Deeper Cure

Dear Sirs: Dr. Martin Gumpert, in his article, "What to Do with Neurotics" (*The Nation*, November 16), refers to a paper by Dr. Peter G. Denker on the "disability" records of some 500 patients, under the diagnosis heading of psychoneurosis.

Dr. Gumpert compares the percentage of the cessation of disability with statistics of the cures of psychoneuroses. He should know that the patient suffering from psychoneurosis is not necessarily

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cured when he starts working. In the statistics of psychoanalytic clinics a cure is understood not only as the ability to return to work but as the regained ability to enjoy life, to be free of sexual inhibitions, and to function on the highest level. Statistics of insurance companies do not say anything about the continued suffering of these patients after the resumption of work.

Many of the conclusions drawn from Dr. Gumpert's comparison are therefore very possibly false.

OTTO E. SPERLING, M.D.

Brooklyn, November 18

Aid for Prisoners

Dear Sirs: If your readers know anybody in prison as a result of injustice, we urge them to send such prisoners' names to the Prisoners' Aid Bureau of the Workers' Defense League, 112 East Nineteenth Street, New York 3, N. Y. The bureau will thus be able to make Christmas a little less gloomy for some of those unjustly jailed. The A. F. of L., C. I. O., I. W. W., N. A. A. C. P., and Indonesia League are all helping in this work. In sending in the names of prisoners, readers might include a small check, since the bureau is in need of funds.

WORKERS' DEFENSE LEAGUE

New York, November 15

Answering a Charge

[In a letter printed in *The Nation* of October 5 Juergen Kuczynski accused Mark Starr of misstatements in a review of Mr. Kuczynski's book, "Labor Conditions in Great Britain." Mr. Starr was in Japan at the time, and has only now been able to reply.]

Dear Sirs: My abbreviated review of Mr. Kuczynski's book originally went into more detail about the claims made by the book jacket. My information was received directly from the A. F. of L., and apparently it disagrees with Mr. Kuczynski's recollection.

The quotation used in the short review of his book is enough to answer the charge that I twisted his conclusions. Apparently, both Mr. Kuczynski's memory and his understanding of his own writings are somewhat less than perfect.

MARK STARR

New York, November 14

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